

RECOVERY FOR THE KOREAN AMERICAN BROKEN COMMUNITY IN LOS ANGELES THROUGH  
A COMMUNITY MODEL: THE CAUSES OF THE LOS ANGELES RIOTS AND SOLUTIONS  
FOR HEALING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE KOREAN AMERICAN

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by  
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## ABSTRACT

Recovery for the Korean American Broken Community in Los Angeles Through  
a Community Model: The Causes of the Los Angeles Riots and Solutions  
for Healing from the Perspective of the Korean American  
by  
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The Korean Americans experienced serious sufferings from the 1992 Los Angeles riots. The burning of small businesses represented not only a financial hardship but also a tragic setback. They suffered outrage and pain over the unprecedented destruction and looting of their businesses, both in and outside of Koreatown, the killing of a young man and the injuries to many others, and the transformations of their dreams for a better life into nightmares of extraordinary loss.

The purpose of this project is not only to suggest a religious community model through which Korean Americans can have a hope for their future again and can endeavor to cope with their suffering, but to introduce religious programs which can help the Korean American community recover from its brokenness and learn to live together with other ethnic minorities in the larger community, Los Angeles.

Chapter 2 of this project examines Korean Americans' economic losses and mental depression as a result of the Los Angeles riots. Chapter 3 explores the premise that the root causes of the riots are not conflicts between African and Korean Americans, but racism, poverty, alienation and neglect by the political and economic system controlled by the power elite. Chapter 4 explains reasons why Korean Americans were victimized more than

other races. Chapter 5 presents a religious community model that Roger of Taize founded in order to overcome the brokenness of the church and the world in the Taize village during World War II. Chapter 6 gives religious programs which a local Korean American church can use for the recovery of the Korean American community in a multiracial society.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Problem Addressed by This Project

This project deals with the problem of brokenness experienced in the Korean American community as a result of suffering from vicious racist rioting in Los Angeles. Among many victims of the Los Angeles riots in 1992, none have suffered more than Korean Americans. The burning of small businesses represented not only a financial hardship but also a tragic setback and a numbing reality that they had not come to a land of opportunity after all. Korean Americans suffered multiple losses: loss of jobs, loss of property, loss of lives, and even loss of hope.

#### Importance of the Problem

Most Korean Americans in Los Angeles are first and second generation Korean Americans. The first generation Korean Americans came to America with a dream and the possibility that they could live a life worthy of humans, live in opulence, and bring up their children in a better educational environment. They considered America as the land of opportunity, and in fact it was so for a while. Korean American immigrants worked hard day and night to survive in a foreign land and to realize their dreams. Some of them succeeded in their undertakings and fields, so they could enjoy economic stability and security. Even though the majority of Korean Americans have not been satisfied with American life, they have worked diligently without losing their hope before the Los Angeles riots in 1992. The riots, however, gave them a terrible shock.

Korean Americans in Los Angeles suffered outrage and pain over the



unprecedented destruction and looting of their businesses, both in and outside of Koreatown, the killing of Edward Lee and the injuries to many others, and the transformations of their dreams for a better life into nightmares of extraordinary loss. Some Korean Americans wanted to return to Korea after the Los Angeles riots. It is not easy, however, to leave the land in which they have lived for more than several years. If they returned to Korea they would have to begin their lives over again. To do so would be with great personal risk, since the entire situation of Korea has been changing so much, compared with the situation when they left Korea. Even though they came to America with the possibility and hope for the future, they have no hope now.

In order for the Korean American community to recover effectively from its brokenness, it is necessary to have more than just an occasional consoling. They need a community model through which Korean Americans can have a hope for their future again and can endeavor to cope with their difficulties, sufferings, and losses. They need a vision of a sound community in which they can live peacefully with other races. Finding an appropriate community model for a multiracial society is very important for the recovery of the broken community in that the model can suggest a goal toward which the broken community can recover and the methods through which it can realize its vision. With the help of the community model, practical programs will also be suggested for the healing and rehabilitation of the broken community.

### Thesis

The thesis of this project is that the Taize community can be a community model through which the Korean American community in Los

Angeles can cope with its brokenness resulting from the riots, and that some religious programs are helpful for the recovery of the Korean American community in a multiracial society.

### Terms Defined

#### Korean American

Korean Americans are people caught between two markedly different cultures--the Korean culture, which they left but still are a part of, and the American culture, which they came into but do not completely fit into. The majority of Korean Americans in the United States are first generation immigrants who were born and educated in Korea and who came to this country as adults. Second generation Korean Americans who were born in America are increasing in number, and most of them are young adults. Even though Korean Americans have a generational gap that is also a cultural gap, they have the historical ethnic consciousness as Koreans and share a common origin and destiny.

#### Korean American Community in Los Angeles

The Korean American community has been on the rise in Los Angeles since the early 1970s. Koreans have been immigrating to Los Angeles in large numbers for about two decades. They have come with their families and have started to establish their new lives, just as other ethnic groups have done. The Korean American community in Los Angeles can be defined as an ethnically related aggregate of Korean Americans who live in Los Angeles. The Korean American community not only shares a modified Korean culture in the life of America, but also recognizes its uniqueness and identity as an ethnic group.

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### Work Previously Done in the Field

Even though it is not easy to find books which deal with the causes and solutions of the riots in Los Angeles in 1992, some magazines, journals and newspapers have reported and examined carefully these issues from various perspectives. Understanding the Riots: Los Angeles Before and After the Rodney King Case reports: the history of the riots in the Los Angeles area including the Watts riots; ethnic tensions before the 1992 Los Angeles riots; the Simi Valley verdict in the trial of the four Los Angeles police officers charged with the beating of Rodney Glen King; the outbreak, process, and terrible result of the riots; and opinions of some people who experienced deeply the riots.<sup>1</sup> This book explains conditions from the causes to the result of the riots by and large. Several other journals, magazines and newspapers dealt with the riots as special reports or cover stories.<sup>2</sup>

Roger of Taize, in his book Parable of Community introduces the essential aspects of his thought and the ecumenical community of Taize.<sup>3</sup> He shares his own experiences after living in the community for scores of years. The book explains what it means to live as a follower of Christ amidst the tensions and the struggles of the contemporary world. His several other books also deal with his meditations, and on a life of peace and unity in a

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<sup>1</sup> Understanding the Riots: Los Angeles Before and After the Rodney King Case (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> See: Newsweek, 11 and 18 May 1992; Time, 11 May 1992; Korea Times, 4, 11, and 18 May 1992; Fellowship, June 1992; and Han-guk Il-bo [Korea Daily News], 23 May 1992 and 18 April 1993.

<sup>3</sup> Roger of Taize [Roger Schutz], Parable of Community: The Rule and Other Basic Texts of Taize (New York: Seabury Press, 1980).

world split apart.<sup>4</sup>

Rex Brico, in his book Taize: Brother Roger and His Community, provides a documentary history of the Taize Community which has grown from a family of brothers to an unparalleled point of attraction for young people from all parts of the world.<sup>5</sup> This book deals with the international and interconfessional monastic community. It depicts one of the most important features of Taize as the creation of a community beyond all inner and outer lines of separation. Both authors suggest a vision of a sound community in a broken world.

#### Scope and Limitations of the Project

This project focuses on the recovery of the Korean American community after the riots. At first, the project deals with economic losses and mental depression that Korean Americans suffered in the riots. It explains the causes of the riots, why the Korean American community was targeted for assault by mobs, and how the Taize community can become a community model for a multiracial society. The study of the Taize community can help us to understand how a sound community can be established and sustained, and how such a community can contribute to the recovery of the Korean American broken community.

Through the community model, this project suggests several programs for the healing and rehabilitation of the Korean American broken community

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<sup>4</sup> See: A Life We Never Dared Hope for: Journal, 1972-1974 (New York: Seabury Press, 1981); Afire with Love: Meditations on Peace and Unity (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1981); and Unity: Man's Tomorrow (New York: Herder & Herder, 1963).

<sup>5</sup> Rex Brico, Taize: Brother Roger and His Community (London: Collins, 1978).

in a multiracial society. These programs do not deal with the social, political, or economic side, but with the religious side which a local Korean American church can practice concretely for the Korean American community and other racial/ethnic communities in the vicinity.

### Procedure for Integration

This project not only analyses the causes of the riots in Los Angeles and the reason for the brokenness of the Korean American community, but also suggests practically the solutions for the recovery of the community from the perspective of the Korean American. On the analysis of the causes of the riots and the reasons for the Korean Americans' victimization, close attention is paid to some newspaper and magazine accounts, mentioned above. These newspapers and magazines provide specific materials from various viewpoints for the analysis of the causes. Especially, the Korea Times supplies the Korean American perspective in the riots.

To find the solutions for the recovery of the broken community, this project examines the Taize community through the books of Brother Roger and Rex Brico. Both of these writers provide some insights for a sound community in a multiracial society. In the end some religious programs are suggested for the healing and rehabilitation of the broken community. Some ideas from Taize's program and from my own experiences with youth groups are useful to find programs which a local church can practice for the recovery of a broken community. Library research is used as the primary tool in this project.

### Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 covers the thesis of the project, the problem and its importance, the definition of major terms, work previously done in the field,

the scope and limitations of the project, and the procedure for integration.

Chapter 2 deals with the sufferings of Korean Americans as a result of the riots. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the economic losses and mental depression of Korean Americans.

Chapter 3 explores the root causes of the riots. This chapter clarifies the essential causes of the riots which are not the conflicts among African Americans, Korean Americans and other ethnic minorities, but racism and social-structural contradictions which are deeply imbedded in the American society.

Chapter 4 examines why Korean Americans were targeted for assault by mobs even though the root causes of the riots were not the tension between African Americans and Korean Americans. The reasons why Korean Americans became the victim are explained on the basis of the theory of the middle-class minority merchant, the biased report of the media, the irresponsibility of police and the justice system, the geographical proximity, and misunderstandings between Korean Americans and African Americans.

Chapter 5 examines the course of the establishment and growth of the Taize community and evaluates Roger's contributions for the unity of the church and the world. The purpose of this chapter is to find a religious community model for the recovery of the Korean American community.

Chapter 6 suggests religious programs through which the Korean American community can recover its brokenness and live together with other ethnic minorities in the neighborhood. The purpose of this chapter is to provide specific guidelines for the healing and rehabilitation of the community. The guidelines include various programs for the healing of Korean Americans as victims, for the understanding of other races, for the improvement in

relationships between races, and for the community construction.

Chapter 7 summarizes the major points presented in this project and offers concluding remarks as well as my own reflections.

## CHAPTER 2

### The Brokenness of the Korean American Community

The questions raised by the Rodney King beating and the subsequent trial and riots went far beyond matters of competence of political and police leadership or the city of Los Angeles. The city of Los Angeles has suffered terrible trauma, hatred, anger, selfishness, violence and fear. The looting, shooting, brutality, and burning laid the city in ashes.<sup>1</sup> There are many victims of the Los Angeles riots. None, however, have suffered more than the Korean American merchants with small businesses who found themselves the focus of bitter hatred from members of a fellow minority and then the helpless pawns of power-hungry political figures. Korean Americans suffered outrage and pain over the unprecedented destruction and looting of their businesses, the killing of Edward Lee and the injuries to many others, and the transformations of their dreams for a better life into nightmares of extraordinary loss.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter is intended to help understand the brokenness of the Korean American community, both in and outside of Koreatown.

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<sup>1</sup> The Los Angeles riots in 1992 ranked as the most deadly civil disturbance in American history. The city's upheaval took a staggering toll: 54 people dead, 2,383 injured. Losses were \$710 million in property. An estimated 20,000 people were put out of work immediately after the unrest. At least 5,000 persons were deemed at "long-term risk" of not returning to work for a year or more. See Eloise Salholz, "A New Challenge for Ueberroth," Newsweek, 18 May 1992, 45; and Understanding the Riots, 130.

<sup>2</sup> The Korean American community was deadly broken: 1 dead, 46 hurt, 2,200 businesses burned or/and looted, and \$350 million in property losses. See Han-Uk Lee, "Hwa-hae-bo-da-neun Dae-chaek-eul Gang-gu-hae-ya-hal Ddae" [A time to consider a counterplan rather than reconciliation], Han-guk Il-bo [Korea Daily News], 23 May 1992, A1.



### Economic Losses

The Korean Americans who lost their livelihoods in the 1992 Los Angeles violence were people who spent the past decade or longer working 12 to 14 hours a day, six to seven days a week, in pursuit of brave and often humble dreams that were reduced to ashes in the space of a few hours. The merchants begging and crying or standing on rooftops with guns were there because their stores were the sum total of their American lives. The riots snatched the very sum total from Korean Americans.<sup>3</sup>

In Koreatown, the burning of family-run businesses represented not only financial hardships but also tragic setbacks. "That was part of myself," said Stepano U. Han, owner of Handy Auto Repair shop located at 6405 Western Ave. "That store was like my own body. When my son and I went down there, it was almost all gone. I was angry. I was mad and crying," he

<sup>3</sup> According to Radio Korea in Los Angeles, the losses for Korean-owned businesses were estimated as follows:

Categories of Victimization	Looted or Burned	Estimated Cost in \$
Cars	61	9,707,000
Beauty Salons	39	5,607,300
Dry Cleaners	82	21,269,000
Electronic Stores	60	16,085,000
Furniture Stores	21	4,215,000
Gas Stations	39	4,792,000
Jewelers	49	6,316,000
Liquor Stores	187	41,812,000
Grocery Markets	273	66,873,850
Swap Meets	336	54,941,300
Restaurants	93	10,797,900
Clothing Stores	222	34,458,734
Video Stores	29	4,192,500
Others	376	65,894,810
Total	1,867	346,962,394

See Dexter H. Kim, "1,867 KA Store Owners Suffer Heaviest Toll," Korea Times, 11 May 1992, 8.

said.<sup>4</sup>

"I've lived in the United States now for 29 years," said Alexander Kahng, the 51 year old merchant who had opened a Korean music store a month before the riots, "I went to college here, and graduated school, and got my doctorate here. But now, none of my experiences here seem meaningful. I wonder if, because I'm Asian, I am not really welcome in American society? I wonder whether I should leave here?"<sup>5</sup>

The Korean American Inter-Agency Council held a press conference on July 22, 1993, at the Los Angeles offices of the Korean American Coalition. The press conference was held to announce the results of a second assessment of the state of Korean American victims 15 months after the riots. The new survey's findings report, "45% of the Korean American-owned businesses still have not reopened, 21% of the Korean American riot victims are at a risk of homelessness . . . ."<sup>6</sup>

Even those who have managed to rebuild, like Susie Hur, are continuing to face difficulties. Hur was able to reopen her business, a clothing outlet, in December 1992 just eight months after her store was destroyed during the riots. But only six months after opening, she was forced to close her business -- the victim of a depressed economy and a high crime rate. Hur

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<sup>4</sup> Sophia Kyung Kim, "Merchants' Shattered Dreams," Korea Times, 11 May 1992, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Understanding the Riots, 130.

<sup>6</sup> Philip W. Chung, "KA Riot Victims Still Suffering," Korea Times, 28 July 1993, 1. Assemblyman Paul Horcher (R-West Covina) explained that the statistics are shocking. "Of the 172 Korean American-owned markets that were burned to the ground last year, only three are currently open for business." See "Bill to Aid Small Markets in South Central L.A. Passes Another Hurdle," Korea Times, 28 July 1993, 1.

said that immediately after reopening her business, she was robbed and two-thirds of her inventory was stolen.<sup>7</sup>

The victims of the Los Angeles riots are not just the merchants who were looted and/or burned out. The list of such victims includes the remaining merchants in Koreatown. The Korean American community is a close-knit business group. Many Korean Americans do business with each other. This fact became more evident after the Los Angeles riot when, with many Korean American businesses being destroyed by the riot, even the unaffected Korean Americans became reluctant to spend their money because of fear of an uncertain future. Due to this decrease in spending, many businesses in Koreatown experienced a significant drop in sales volume. Unfortunately, these businesses have a fixed amount of overhead which must be recouped monthly. If these businesses cannot cover their overhead, they may end up laying off their employees, delay payment of expenses or may even have to declare bankruptcy.

#### Post-Riot Depression

Most Korean Americans who lost their businesses and jobs in the riots are mentally suffering from post-riot depression. The physical scars not only remain a constant reminder, but bring the invisible scars that will take weeks, months, perhaps years to heal for many.<sup>8</sup> After the riots, increasingly growing is the number of riot victims who are seeking professional help from psychiatrists and counselors. "We are getting about five riot victims a day," said Jiun Shin, a mental health nurse therapist at the Asian Pacific Treatment

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<sup>7</sup> Chung, 1.

<sup>8</sup> William I. Young, "Overcoming Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," Korea Times, 26 May 1992, 2.

Counseling Center (APTCC).<sup>9</sup>

According to mental health professionals who were interviewed, many riot victims are suffering from symptoms related to post-traumatic stress syndrome: headaches, anger, insomnia, heart palpitation, depression, dizziness, anxiety, chest pain and a sense of helplessness. Dr. William I. Young explains the symptoms in more detail as follows: recurring memories and dreams of the event; a sense of personal isolation and detachment from others; disturbed sleep and concentration; diminished interest in significant activities; an inability to have loving feelings; in young children, developmental regression in such areas as toilet training and language; sense of a foreshortened future, no hope of family life, career or living to old age.<sup>10</sup> The symptoms are made worse by any reminder of the traumatic experience. Finding meaning after a traumatic event can be a long and a difficult process. Even if the pain is denied for a while, it will push through later many times in the form of an illness or decreased productivity or moral.<sup>11</sup>

The survey at the press conference reports a significant number of the victims are still experiencing mental and health problems related to the riots. During the year after the riots, APTCC interviewed and counseled more than 4,000 Korean Americans suffering from various symptoms related to post-traumatic stress syndrome. Counselors in the center agree that the

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<sup>9</sup> Sophia Kyung Kim, "KA Victims Seeking Professional Help: Post-Riot Depression," Korea Times, 1 June 1992, 4. Sook-Hee Roh, a marriage and family counselor at Western Region Asian Pacific Agency, said she has about 20 to 30 riot victims on a waiting list.

<sup>10</sup> Young, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

symptoms of riot victims are unexpectedly serious. APTCC says sixty-five percent of the clients are in states of mental health that need medication such as anti-melancholy medicine.<sup>12</sup> Emotional recovery is almost as difficult as financial recovery, particularly since immigrant Korean Americans have difficulty "opening up and learning how to deal" with emotional problems.<sup>13</sup>

With emotions still raw and volatile, some Korean Americans in Los Angeles fear traveling through a poor black neighborhood. They are also afraid to return to the jobs in an area like South Central Los Angeles, site of the worst destruction. After four days of torching, looting, killing and madness, Korean Americans' businesses and jobs were laid in ruins. So were the immigrants' American dreams. The paradise they yearned for in America was lost and heaven turned into hell. The American dream fell to pieces and tore their hearts. Now they are suffering not only from economic losses, but mental depression.

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<sup>12</sup> Kang-Kyu Lee, "Sa-i-gu Pok-dong Hu-yu-jeung-eun Mu-eot-in-ga" [What is aftereffects of the 4.29 riots], Han-guk Il-bo [Korea Daily News], 18 April 1993, A7.

<sup>13</sup> Sophia Kyung Kim, "KA Victims Seeking Professional Help," 4.

## CHAPTER 3

### The Causes of the Riots

After the Watts riots in 1965, there were extensive studies and the following causes were identified: unemployment, poor schools, police brutality, overcrowding, living conditions, poor public transportation, and a delay in sending in the National Guard. These were the causes of the 1965 riots.<sup>1</sup> Twenty-seven years after the riots, people were again disappointed, hurt, and angered by what happened in Los Angeles. They asked, "Why the riots again?" Someone said, "It's because of white racism." Other said, "It is because of conflicts between African Americans and Korean Americans." And another said, "It is because of economic inequities." The answer, however, is not simple, but more complex. In this chapter, the root causes of the Los Angeles riots are examined.

#### The Wrong Verdict: The Rodney King Case

America was founded and built on the principle that all humans are created equal. This principle was an important basis for democracy, and has been tested and upheld throughout the history of the United States. In the Rodney King Case the principle of equality has undergone a trial. What appears to be an unfair verdict in this case has painfully reminded us of the imperfection in the country's effort to uphold this principle. The pain was greatly increased by those in Los Angeles who demonstrated their outrage and displeasure by hurting their fellow neighbors. Though the degree of impact the verdict had on such behavior is debatable, clearly the unpopular

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<sup>1</sup> Understanding the Riots, 9-21.

verdict was the catalyst. For many, equality is only a statement on a piece of paper. The verdict is a gross travesty of justice and adds substance to the charge that in American society, there is a dual standard of justice, one for whites, and one for people of color.

Rodney King the person is not the issue. Whether he had a hundred arrests did not matter to African Americans. They saw over and over on television what they already knew was true in Los Angeles and other places across the country. They thought that finally, thanks to modern technology, they had a clear case of police brutality.<sup>2</sup>

How could it be otherwise? When the verdict came, it was clear that the administration of justice in the courts has not progressed to fairness at all. Even the location of the trial away from Los Angeles to Simi Valley was construed as thwarting the rendering of justice.<sup>3</sup>

King was a symbol. He embodied all people seeking justice in the courts. The jury's verdict was a violation of African American rights because African Americans were once again denied justice under the law. African Americans thought the treatment of Rodney King was a violation of

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<sup>2</sup> The Newsweek Poll of April 30 – May 1, 1992 shows that seventy– three percent of whites and ninety–two of blacks think the verdict finding the policemen not guilty was not justified. See Tom Mathews, "The Siege of L.A.," Newsweek, 11 May 1992, 30. In a Time/CNN Poll conducted on April 30 by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman, seventy–eight percent of 200 blacks questioned, and seventy–nine percent of 798 whites, said also they thought before the verdict that the policemen would be found guilty. See George J. Church, "The Fire This Time," Time, 11 May 1992, 22.

<sup>3</sup> The defense got a change of venue from Los Angeles to Simi Valley, a comfortable, white middle–class suburb favored by officers retiring from the LAPD. The jurors were ten whites, one Hispanic, and one Asian. It was the genius of the defense to neutralize the video by playing up the high– speed chase that preceded King's beating and the contempt he had shown for the police. Mathews, 33.

them as citizens of Los Angeles. After all the eighty-one seconds of the King-beating video gave way to seventy-two hours of riot coverage.

### Racism

Thirty years ago, in August of 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. stood before a crowd of a quarter million people at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. He spoke about a dream for racial unity and justice. In words now familiar to people around the world, he articulated a dream of a nation where his children "would be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." This speech came to symbolize not just the march, but the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Even though some elements of King's dream have been realized in the thirty years since that march, the dream of true racial equality remains unfulfilled.<sup>4</sup>

Racism proves the most nagging stumbling block for a free and just society. Even when personal racism seems to be abated a bit after a considerable period of living and working together in a community, racism which permeates the very foundation of society, institutions, substructure of culture and life in general is next to impossible to eradicate.

Even though the Simi Valley verdict sparked the riots, the black community's rage had long been building. Citing numerous incidents, black leaders charged that local police forces had systematically brutalized and mistreated blacks.

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<sup>4</sup> Some steps toward the realization of the dream include: passing of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; creation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; enforcement of school desegregation by the Supreme Court during the 1960s; and growth of the number of African American voters. See Jo Becker, "A Dream Still Unfulfilled," editorial, Fellowship, July/Aug. 1993, 3.



Three years ago . . . black private investigator Don Jackson videotaped his interrogation by Long Beach Cops after a routine traffic stop. Although one of the officers was recorded shoving Jackson's head through a plate-glass window, a jury could not reach a decision as to whether this was an excessive use of force. During the 1970s, 16 blacks died as a result of choke holds administered by Los Angeles police. Police chief Daryl Gates defended the use of the procedure at the time, suggesting that blacks had some anatomical weakness that made them especially vulnerable to that method of restraint.<sup>5</sup>

Racism is a very subtle disease that is eating at the fabric of the nation. The sin of racism continues to dominate the nation's life and to deny dignity and justice to all people of color. Entrenched racism in all of its forms generates cycles of violence, division and a shattered community.

Racial disputes between whites and blacks are embodied in the deep-rooted structural conflicts of American history and can be traced back to the history of American slavery. The American people are still paying a heavy price for past sins committed by southern plantation owners before the American Civil War.

Abraham Lincoln said in his second inaugural address, "Every drop of blood drawn with a lash was paid by another drawn with a sword." The racial antipathy in the United States between whites and blacks is not likely to go away soon.

The verdict given by the jury in the Rodney King case, without a single black participant, and the frustration of racial discrimination broke the limits of tolerance.

#### Economic Inequities and Social Conditions

The Los Angeles riots are the result partly of economic inequities in the

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<sup>5</sup> David Ellis, "L.A. Lawless," Time, 11 May 1992, 28.

nation's cities. Cities throughout the United States are undermined by homelessness, poverty and neglect. Since 1969, the overall black poverty rate showed little improvement; and it has worsened dramatically in the nation's inner cities. Cut off from the mainstream economy, inner-city blacks have fallen farther behind the rest of the black population. According to census figures, "The poverty rate among urban blacks rose to 33.8% in 1990 from 21.2% in 1969 . . . ."<sup>6</sup>

The issue is not so much that the number of Americans below the poverty line is increasing, even though it is true. The real issue is that poverty has become concentrated in inner cities at a time when city governments are increasingly unable to cope.<sup>7</sup>

Mickey Kaus, the author of The End of Equality, an analysis of social-welfare policy, says "What distinguishes the Los Angeles riots of 1992 from the Los Angeles riots of 1965 seems to be that in 1992 few Americans retain much confidence that the problems of the 'ghetto poor' underclass can be overcome."<sup>8</sup> The economic system, where ten percent of the population owns eighty-six percent of the wealth, has perpetuated economic exploitation and

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<sup>6</sup> Understanding the Riots, 117. In 1991 one of every three African Americans and one of every four Latinos were classified as poor. See Dan Swinney, "A New Community Development Vision," Church and Society, Jan./Feb. 1993, 82.

<sup>7</sup> Tom Morganthau, "The Price of Neglect," Newsweek, 11 May 1992, 54.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Mickey Kaus, "Yes, Something Will Work: Work," Newsweek, 18 May 1992, 38. Tom Morganthau thinks the important reasons for the poverty in the nation's cities are that the great American middle class has fled to the suburbs, and that "big cities have gradually lost the manufacturing industries that historically offered entry-level jobs to low-income Americans." See Morganthau, 54.

unequal opportunity in inner cities of color.<sup>9</sup>

Jo Becker, an executive secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Los Angeles, says unemployment "approaches 40-50% in inner-city communities of color."<sup>10</sup> This means there are many people who are idle, so they drift toward drugs to escape their social condition. South Central Los Angeles is ground zero for crack cocaine and the catastrophic expansion in the nationwide underground market for guns. There are an estimated 100,000 gangbangers.<sup>11</sup> Twenty percent of all young black men in this area are under the supervision of the justice system in jail, in prison, on probation or on parole.<sup>12</sup>

Jesse Jackson says that there are almost as many black men in prison as there are in college, and that the annual cost of supporting each inmate is higher than tuition, room and board at Harvard or Yale.<sup>13</sup> Young African American men, stigmatized by their prison records, have difficulty in finding employment. Businesses in inner-city communities do not hire them. They are also likely to be absentee fathers because they cannot take the enormous burden and responsibility of child-rearing. And their children can easily join gangs and get involved with crime and drugs. Governments have too often invested resources in weapons systems, increased police presence and

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<sup>9</sup> Becker, 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Morgenthau, 54.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

expanded prison facilities rather than in programs of social transformation.<sup>14</sup> The neglect of inner cities is so deep that people who live in these areas are discarded people. The socio-economic condition of these young people is such that it cannot be worsened by participation in social unrest.

When the Los Angeles riots broke out, mainstream media defined the cause of the riots as the conflict between African Americans and Korean Americans. Although sometimes a tension has been evident between two races, it is not the core problem of the unrest. As examined above, the root causes of the violent outrage are racism, poverty, alienation and neglect by the political and economic system controlled by the power elite. If the cause of the riots is not the conflict of African Americans versus Korean Americans, why were Korean Americans made the victim more than any other races? In the following chapter, this issue is dealt with in detail.

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<sup>14</sup> Becker, 3.

## CHAPTER 4

### The Korean American Community as Scapegoat

Korean Americans have endless questions of despair after the Los Angeles riots. Why Koreatown? Why were Korean Americans targeted for assault by mobs? Was it simply due to the proximity of Koreatown to the black neighborhood? Why didn't the police come sooner? Where were the police? What happened with the famed swift mobility and efficient riot control capacity of the Los Angeles police force? Was it just imprudence that the American mass media presented misleading delineations of the self-defense action organized by Korean youth and merchants in the absence of police protection? This chapter deals with why the Koreans were targeted for assault by mobs, even though the core causes of the riots are not the conflict between African and Korean Americans.

#### Theory of the Middle-Class Minority Merchant

Why were Korean Americans the most seriously victimized in the riots? It can be understood on the grounds of "the theory of the middle-class minority merchant." The theory is based on analysis of experiences of Jewish merchants scattered all over the world, Chinese merchants in South-East Asia, and Indian merchants in Burma and Uganda and the Republic of South Africa. Its main point is that the middle-class minority merchants are targeted for assault by mobs whenever riots or crises break out. With this theory, Andrew Park, former professor at the School of Theology at Claremont, explains why Korean American merchants fell so seriously as victims to the riots. Park says that immigrant merchants are easily targeted for assault because they are easily found by rioters, because

they have financial power but have no political power, and because they are considered as a symbol of the rich who are the object of the poor's wrath.<sup>1</sup>

Korean American merchants open their businesses in the inner city from which the white middle class had already left, because they can simply begin small businesses with relatively small capital in the area. Those who operate small groceries and liquor stores in the poorer neighborhoods are, themselves, the poorest of those Korean Americans who were fortunate enough to immigrate to the United States. The typical Korean American grocers in South Central Los Angeles start up with an insufficient credit history; this plus their location in a risky area, makes achieving a bank loan impossible. Although Korean American merchants generally begin their businesses like this, other minorities do not comprehend such a situation. They consider Korean Americans as economic exploiters in their communities because Korean American merchants own the stores and seem to be comparatively richer than other minorities. They are understandably concerned that they are losing influence and control in what used to be their own communities, and view Korean Americans as outside invaders taking over another of their community resources.<sup>2</sup> They blame their poor economic state on Korean Americans. As a result, if a crisis happens in that area, mobs naturally attack Korean Americans as the middle-class minority merchants. When the Watts riots occurred in 1965, Jewish merchants were most bitterly attacked by mobs, because they were the status symbol of the middle-class minority

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Park, "Heuk-in-ji-yeok Ddeo-na-ya Han-da" [We have to leave from the black area], Han-guk Il-bo [Korea Daily News], 12 May 1992, A19.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Reyes Fruto and Ken Wibecan, "Blacks, Koreans Must Confront Racism, Not Each Other," Korea Times, 6 July 1992, 7.

merchant. According to the theory, although minorities other than Jews or Korean Americans have businesses in inner cities, they are to be attacked again in a crisis.

### Biased Reports of the Media

The American mass media played an important role in making Korean Americans the victims of the riots. The essence of media is to treat all events and occurrences with fairness, equity and accuracy. However, the mainstream media have failed to portray both the Los Angeles riots and previous tensions between African and Korean Americans in a fair manner.

For many years the news media have inflamed the rage and passion of black people toward Korean Americans through inaccurate, insensitive and unbalanced coverage. They have made their own contributions to the suffering of the Korean American community. The mainstream media's ignorance and sensationalism in Korean-black coverage has had a life-threatening impact on many fearful Korean Americans, contributing to the destruction of the city of Los Angeles, and polarizing the two misunderstood groups, rather than healing and calming tensions. The media have perpetuated the problem existing in South Central Los Angeles. Before Korean Americans and African Americans had a chance to get to know each other and to learn each other's culture and history, the media have pitted the two minorities against each other. The media repeatedly gave unbalanced coverage. For example, the media consistently equated the Soon Ja Du case with the Rodney King verdicts. Almost all media dealing with Korean-black tensions reported the Soon Ja Du case like Time magazine:

[G]rocer Soon Ja Du was convicted of killing 15-year-old Latasha Harlins, whom she accused of stealing a \$1.79 bottle of orange juice. Although an in-store video camera clearly showed that Du had shot

Harlins in the back as she left the store, the trial judge sentenced the Korean to just five years' probation.<sup>3</sup>

The media did not report that for many months before the incident, gang members terrorized the Du family with shop lifting, vandalism and brutal physical force. "Du grabbed the gun after she was punched four times by Latasha Harlins and knocked to the ground twice."<sup>4</sup>

One may agree or disagree with Judge Karlin's ruling, but it is unjust that all the stories have consistently left out the other important facts that drove the Korean woman to do what she did. The Du case is not a race-related one. It is one of the countless homicides that took place in Los Angeles. Yet most media coverage singled out Du as a Korean. They don't do that with other cases.

While the African American side of the story was given, the Korean American side was not covered by the mainstream media also in dealing with the causes of the Los Angeles riots. They tried to turn economic, political and social issues into a black and Korean issue.

Ted Koppel's Nightline show on Friday, May 1, 1992 dealt in part with Korean-black tension, but Koppel had only African American guests. That was unfair to Korean Americans. The national TV coverage has given voice to angry African Americans, some of whom blame Korean Americans for the woes of inner-city black and Latin residents, who erupted in an orgy of looting, arson and mayhem triggered by the unjust Rodney King verdict.

State Senator Art Torres said, "a great disappointment to me during this

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<sup>3</sup> Ellis, 29.

<sup>4</sup> Kapson Yim Lee, "Civil Rights Commission Hears Community Criticism of Media," Korea Times, 18 May 1992, 6.



crisis was the manner in which the news media and other leaders have ignored the Korean Americans."<sup>5</sup> The mainstream American media served to widen the gap between African and Korean Americans and to facilitate the victimization of Korean Americans in the Los Angeles riots.

#### Irresponsibility of Police and the Justice System

Korean Americans were victimized by the system too. The Los Angeles police waited more than 24 hours to respond to calls for help. Korean Americans were abandoned by the established order.

Korean Americans have been treated pretty shabbily by the Los Angeles police ever before the riots. For years, people who lived in the Koreatown area have felt that they just have not gotten adequate police protection. However during the riots, it reached gigantic proportions. On the first day of the riots, a small contingent of police made their way to a spot near the now-famous intersection of Normandy and Florence, credited with being the riot's "epicenter," but after a brief scuffle with some gang members, the police retreated. From the epicenter of Normandy and Florence, the violence rippled outward. Drivers jumped from cars and fled. Shouting kids smashed windows, tromped on hoods and roofs, torched the abandoned vehicles. Then they turned to a liquor store, small shops, and a gas station. The LAPD were nowhere in sight. The police department's slow response had contributed to the devastation. Not until the next day would there be even a semblance of force, which by the end would include California National Guardmen and Federal troops called out by President Bush. In anticipation of disturbances following the verdict, LAPD chief Darryl Gates set aside a

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<sup>5</sup> Art Torres, letter, Korea Times, 26 May 1992, 6.

million dollars and a special riot plan. But the force was virtually invisible in the early hours of the rioting, allowing many looters to smash storefronts and torch buildings with impunity.<sup>6</sup>

Even though Koreatown was being vandalized, police sectioned off several roadways to prevent destruction from spreading north to Hollywood and Beverly Hills, in which the rich whites lived, from the poorer regions of the city.

As Los Angeles burned, not only police but other urban warriors stood alone: the National Guard did not arrive in time; political leaders including President Bush were out of touch with the turmoil. They came and acted too late.

"I don't hate the looters, arsonists or people involved in the riot," said Jin Ho Lee, spokesman for the Korean American Victims Alliance. "I'm more angry with the government and the media," said Lee.<sup>7</sup> The police and the politicians did not protect the Korean American community. They were slow and irresponsible. Their irresponsibility is another reason for the emotional and physical devastation of Korean Americans.

#### Geographical Proximity

Koreatown was hit because it stood in the route of the onward hurricane and was overrun by the fury of the pent-up feeling of indignity built up over the years among the African American and Hispanic population. Being located as it is, the damages were unavoidable. In this sense, the Los Angeles tragedy was a unavoidable disaster for the Korean American

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<sup>6</sup> Robin Washington, "Why," Fellowship, June 1992, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Fruto and Wibecan, 7.

community.

Dong Gil Kim, a member of the Korean National Assembly, said that since the Korean American community was a "buffer zone" between the rich whites and African Americans, Korean Americans were victimized.<sup>8</sup>

Jewish Americans were most seriously victimized in the Watts riots in 1965, but they were not targeted for assault by mobs in the Los Angeles riots in 1992, because African Americans and Jewish Americans were more geographically isolated. In a way the Korean American community took the place of the Jewish community.

#### Misunderstandings Between Korean Americans and African Americans

Misunderstandings between African and Korean Americans also make the latter the victim of the riots. From the African American perspective, Korean American merchants get special breaks, charge high prices and do not hire African American workers. They are cold, arrogant, insensitive, racist and suspect African American customers of being shoplifters. They do not give anything back to the community in which they operate their businesses. Korean Americans get special interest-free loans from the United States government to start businesses, and so on down a long list of complaints. "The rumors have persisted for years in contrast to widespread reports to the contrary."<sup>9</sup>

Like all accusations, some of them are true. But certainly not all the Korean merchants who did business in the area are the type who have been accused of those things. There are also many merchants who have

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<sup>8</sup> Koreatown Before and After the Riot (Los Angeles: Edward Lee Memorial Scholarship Foundation, 1993), 168.

<sup>9</sup> Fruto and Wibecan, 7.

exemplary relationships with their customers, and still their stores were burnt down.

Chung Lee, for example, has been a grocer in Watts for some 15 years. His name was synonymous with "good neighbor." He tried tirelessly to give back to the community. He employed local blacks, sponsored Little League baseball teams, donated to black politicians and went to his customers' funerals. On April 29 his store was burned to the ground despite the efforts of thirty of his customers to save it. His store suffered \$1.5 million in damages.<sup>10</sup>

What seems to help feed African Americans resentment is the lack of knowledge on how most of the businesses run by Korean Americans in South Central Los Angeles and Koreatown became a success. Korean American merchants do not get government aid, but work hard countless hours seven days a week, slowly accumulating enough capital to start a business. They pool their own resources to open businesses, which they work long hours to operate. According to the Korean American Grocers Association, "only 8 percent of immigrants open a store within a year of arrival in the United States, and 17 percent open a business within three years: It takes at least that long to earn and save capital."<sup>11</sup>

Concerning merchant rudeness, "It is wrong for African Americans to say all Korean Americans are rude," says Edward Chang, a UC Riverside professor of ethnic and women's studies. He explains that Korean Americans are exceptionally family oriented, and this affects their attitudes in dealing

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<sup>10</sup> Sophia Kyung Kim, "Watts Market Burns: Neighbors Try to Save Store," Korea Times, 11 May 1992, 1, 8,

<sup>11</sup> Fruto and Wibecan, 7.

with people they don't know. He says, "They are very protective of their families, so they're nice to people they know, and they're rude to strangers."<sup>12</sup> There is a cultural gap between Korean Americans which is not easy to overcome without each race's endeavor and tolerance.

On the cultural level, neither Korean Americans nor African Americans have created a dialogue for cultural understanding, and a gulf of misunderstanding and frustration separates them.

Korean Americans come from a country with a homogeneous population which has little extensive experience in dealing with other racial groups. Their greatest exposure with a racial "other," which occurred with the Japanese occupation of Korea for 36 years between 1910 and 1945, was anything but an experience in peaceful coexistence. Immigrating Koreans import this lack of experience with racial others, which has contributed to the gulf between themselves and African Americans. It is clear that Korean Americans do not know the extent to which their behavior, culture, and business practices clash with African Americans' lives and experiences in America.<sup>13</sup> Korean Americans were made the victims in the riots, because of such lack of cultural exchange and understanding between two communities in South Central Los Angeles and Koreatown.

As examined in this chapter, Korean Americans suffered losses in the Los Angeles riots on account of their economic and social status as middle-class minority merchants and the geographical proximity of

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Another barrier is language. That immigrants have little knowledge of English further widens the cultural gulf between themselves and African Americans.

Koreatown. They were frustrated by the inadequate response from the LAPD, the National Guard, the local government and the media. Korean Americans were abandoned by police and the whole justice system. Korean Americans were used as the scapegoat to channel mob anger.

## CHAPTER 5

### A Religious Community Model for the Multiracial Society

In the previous chapters we examined that in the Los Angeles riots the Korean American community was broken both on the physical side and on the mental side, and that the causes of the riots are the wrong verdict of the Rodney King case as a catalyst, institutional racism, economic inequities, and social conditions. And the reason why the Korean American community was made the victim of the riots was examined on the basis of the theory of the middle-class minority merchant, the biased reporting of the media, the irresponsibility of police and the justice system, geographical proximity, and misunderstandings between Korean Americans and African Americans.

Now a question may quite well be asked: How can we solve these problems in a multiracial society? Even though the causes of the riots are involved in political, social, and economic issues, I could not find easy solutions. However, as a pastor, I believe the religious solution is more effective than any other solutions in a multiracial society like Los Angeles. The American society could not overcome its problems merely with secular solutions suggested after the Watts riots. In order to approach this situation in a religious context, it is necessary to find a religious model which can help the broken community to have hope for the future and to cope with its suffering.

The Taize community is suitable for a religious community model in that it was built for healing the world split apart by World War II. This chapter deals with the historical background of Taize as a religious community model, its contributions for the unity of the church and the world, and religious

programs that Taize has practiced for building unity.

### The Taize Community

The Taize Community, the first monastic movement of the Reformed Protestant tradition, would never have begun without Roger Schutz's creative spirituality and life. Taize is the name of a tiny village in the heart of the Burgundy region of eastern France. Roger Schutz, called Brother Roger, first came to Taize in 1940, at the age of twenty-five. He had a dream to start a community "on account of Christ and the Gospel," and he came to the village Taize to do so. From a poor and old woman, Roger bought a house in which he and his fellows could pray and study and meditate. In December 1940, the *Grande Communaute* held its first meeting in the house. After the colloquium, he lived alone for two years. He opened his house as a place of welcome for refugees, especially Jews, fleeing from the Nazis. After two years he was joined by his first brothers who considered themselves part of the *Grande Communaute*, and in 1949 they committed themselves for life to celibacy and to life together. Their house became a center for all kinds of students, workers, and trades union officials. They discussed many topics such as the right to own property, community of goods, and socialization of the means of production, which seemed to be most popular at that time. Year after year, other brothers followed them to make the same monastic commitments.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Taize community lived in relative isolation during the first twenty years, gradually young people began to come to the community. In 1970 the idea of holding a "Council of Youth" was announced and was

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<sup>1</sup> Roger of Taize, Parable of Community, 85.



opened at Taize in 1974. About 40,000 people attended the first Council of Youth. After that time, Taize was crowded with people from the four corners of the earth. At first, the Taize community consisted of brothers from different Protestant denominations. Today it includes many Catholics as well. Essentially Taize is an ecumenical community. It is also international -- its ninety or so brothers coming from some twenty-five different countries throughout the world. All the brothers do not always remain in Taize; some live in small groups, known as fraternities, among the poor on different continents. Taize's vocation is to strive for communion among all: not only reconciliation among Christians, but also reconciliation among all of humanity.<sup>2</sup>

### Brother Roger's Spiritual Experiences from Brokenness

#### Religious Influences of Parents

##### and Grandmother

Roger built up the thought of communion and reconciliation under the influence of his parents from his early childhood. He was born on May 12th, 1915, near Neuchatel in Switzerland. His father was a pastor and gave a religious stamp to Roger's upbringing from his childhood. His mother prevented him from falling into a narrow nationalism. Roger learned to overcome denominational borders. Sometimes his father led him into a Catholic Church to pray. It was no common practice for a Swiss clergyman in those days.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 85-86.

<sup>3</sup> Brico, 11.

The courage and gesture of Roger's grandmother had a great influence on him in his childhood. Roger thinks one of the most significant events of his life happened to him because of his grandmother.

She could bear the divisions among Christians no longer. She was a member of a family which had been Protestant for more than four centuries, and she decided to receive Communion at the Catholic Church . . . . When she could no longer stand the intolerable disunity in Europe, she felt intuitively that the Catholic Mass represented something essential. This intuition of hers left a deep impression on me. I will bear its stamp till my dying day; while I was still a child, it gave me a Catholic soul.<sup>4</sup>

When Roger became thirteen years old and lodgings had to be found for him near his school, his parents chose the family of a Catholic widow. He was surrounded by a living Catholic faith. Roger says, "How was it possible that these two families, my own and the one I stayed with, could be divided in faith when on both sides there was so much honesty with God?"<sup>5</sup> His parents gave him a thought beyond denominational borders and a narrow nationalism. He owes his ecumenical vocation to the generosity of his parents and grandmother.

### Negative Experience of Christians

#### Split Apart

In spite of the religious influences of his parents and grandmother, Roger almost lost his faith in his youth because of the unbearable attitudes of both Protestants and Catholics. He hated their disunity. He was disappointed with Christians split apart into different denominations. As soon as he found his faith again, such negative experiences led him to look for ways of living

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 177.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 179.

a vocation devoted to Christian unity. Through his negative experience of Christians split apart, Roger desired eagerly the unity of all Christians and developed an interest in monastic life.<sup>6</sup>

Beginnning Experience of  
the Taize Community

When Roger was a senior at the University of Lausanne at which he studied theology, he was elected president of the Protestant Student Federation in Lausanne. During his presidency, he founded a group for the study of questions of faith, called the *Grande Communaute*, in 1939. Its members tried to help their Christian fellow students out of their isolation and towards a common purpose in life through prayer and work. They opened colloquia and retreats. The colloquia, prepared by the members and other Protestant intellectuals, were meetings of an intense and authentic spirituality. Retreats included meditation, examination of conscience, and confession. Through the *Grande Communaute*, Roger found a possibility of a Christian Community with an intense and authentic spirituality.<sup>7</sup>

In 1940 Roger bought a house in Burgundy, at which his group could pray and study. Even though the retreats of the *Grande Communaute* impressed a lot of people, he considered them as part of his larger perspective. In December 1940, the *Grande Communaute* opened its first meeting in the house. After the colloquium Roger did not leave it, but stayed behind to have quiet time. He could not, however, stay alone, because many refugees visited him almost hourly. Roger received them and took care of

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 11-12.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 12-13.

them. Caring for them he did not skip his quiet time, but retired for prayer and meditation to a room three times a day.<sup>8</sup> During this time Roger composed a pamphlet of his monastic ideal. Its main guidelines are as follows: every day let your work and rest be quickened by the Word of God; keep inner silence in all things and you will dwell in Christ; be filled with the spirit of the Beatitudes: joy, simplicity, and mercy.<sup>9</sup>

While remaining in Switzerland from November 1942, Roger was preparing his dissertation for the ordination on "The Monastic Ideal before Saint Benedict and its Conformity to the Gospel." Through this dissertation he was sure that Christians could live a monastic life and still be faithful to the Gospel. Roger outlined his monastic ideal through prayer, meditation, study, and caring for refugees in Taize and Switzerland.

### Experience from the World

#### Split Apart

Roger experienced sufferings from the divisions of the world. He was disappointed by the narrow nationalism of European countries and the First and Second World Wars. Especially during the Second World War he had experienced hardships and witnessed terrible scenes of the war.<sup>10</sup> The world was completely split apart, and it needed reconciliation. His house in Taize was searched several times and he received warnings from the Gestapo. At last the German authorities had occupied his house, so that he had to move

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<sup>8</sup> John Heijke, An Ecumenical Light on the Renewal of Religious Community Life: Taize (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1967), 24-25.

<sup>9</sup> Brico, 13-14.

<sup>10</sup> Roger of Taize, A Life We Never Dared Hope For, 43.

into and remained in Switzerland for two years until the end of the Second World War. After the war, the terror of the German occupation had been replaced by the hatred of the local France population for the German prisoners-of-war in a camp near Taize. What was worse, some people murdered a young German Catholic priest.<sup>11</sup> Roger and his brothers tried to foster reconciliation. They visited the prisoners and shared what they had with them. They also took care of children who had lost their parents in the war, providing a home for them at Taize.<sup>12</sup> Roger could not bear the divisions of the world. He recognized that the world needed reconciliation, and strove toward that goal. And he thought if disunity did exist, he should begin with himself and resolve to understand every person fully. From that time he sought to understand all, rather than to be understood.<sup>13</sup>

#### Contributions for the Recovery of the Community

Roger and his Taize community contributed greatly to the recovery of the broken church and world with his positive experiences through his family and monastic tradition, and his negative experiences through the divisions among Christians and in the world. Even though he despaired of the divisions among all, he could find hope in Christ and the monastic movement through the Taize community. He found the possibility to transform the society through the community life. His thought and common life can be summarized as unity or reconciliation. He rendered services for the unity of

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<sup>11</sup> Roger of Taize, "The Wonder of a Love," in Afire with Love, 120-21.

<sup>12</sup> Brico, 15-18.

<sup>13</sup> Roger of Taize, "Wonder of a Love," in Afire with Love, 117.

the church and the unity of the world.

### The Unity of the Church

Roger emphasizes the unity of the church. He rejects fighting against each other within Christendom. He proposes that Christians should abandon putting themselves in the categories of "progressive" or "conservative."<sup>14</sup> For him the unity of the church should be accomplished both among the members in the church and among churches. For the unity of the church, Christians should forgive each other and try to understand one another with an all-important trust which comes from the heart. "When divisions and rivalries bring things to a standstill, it is most important to visit and listen to one another, and to celebrate the paschal mystery together."<sup>15</sup> Without reconciliation through forgiving and understanding others, no one can continue their fellowship with Christ. With reconciliation in mind, Roger's Taize community has sought solidarity within the diversity of the Protestant denominations. Taize includes German and Scandinavian Lutheranism, Dutch, Swiss and French Calvinism, the Free Churches, the Baptist Churches and the Pentecostal Churches.<sup>16</sup>

Roger strived not only for unity among Christians split apart into different Protestant denominations, but also for unity between the Protestant Church and the Catholic Church. Roger met Popes and cardinals of the Catholic Church, and urged them to pay attention to the ecumenical

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<sup>14</sup> Roger of Taize, Unity: Man's Tomorrow, 56.

<sup>15</sup> Roger of Taize, "Itinerary for a Pilgrim," in Parable of Community, 78-79.

<sup>16</sup> Heijke, 132.

movement. The Vatican sent accredited auditors to the ecumenical conference of Faith and Order. In 1960, talks were held in Taize between Roman Catholic bishops and pastors from different Protestant traditions. It was the first ecumenical discussion at that level with the Catholic Church since the Reformation. When the Second Vatican Council began in 1962, Brother Roger was asked to be present at the sessions as guest. Since 1966, members of an international Catholic congregation of sisters have taken responsibility for a large part of the work of welcoming people to Taize. In 1969 Roger was asked to collaborate in the work of SODEPAX, the joint commission for peace and justice of the Vatican and the World Council of Churches.<sup>17</sup> For the reconciliation between churches, Roger showed the vision and worked hard to accomplish it.

### Unity of the World

Roger's vocation is to strive for communion among all. He does not view reconciliation among Christians as an end in itself. He is concerned all of humanity. He thinks the church is a place of communion for all.<sup>18</sup> To cope with so many divisions among human beings, he thought that he should begin with himself and commit himself to understanding everything in every human being. He began to listen to young people and discuss with them. Young people began coming to Taize, and the idea of holding a "Council of Youth" grew. It was announced in 1970 and opened in 1974 with 40,000 people present from all over the world. Those who visit at Taize have every possible background and viewpoint: Christians and non-believers, men and

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<sup>17</sup> Brico, 20-27.

<sup>18</sup> Roger of Taize, Unity: Man's Tomorrow, 18.

women, and Hindus and Muslims. Some of them with the background of other religions speak of Christ as their brother. For Roger and his community, unity is never limited to the religious sector of human existence. They try ceaselessly to become aware of the conditions of injustice and oppression and to transform them. Wherever they are placed, they are not afraid of the struggle for the oppressed, whether believers or not. They think "the search for justice calls for a life of concrete solidarity with the very poor."<sup>19</sup> They believe, "communion with the poverty-stricken in the world also means participating in the world's struggle against its poverty. The Christians' place is in the thick of this struggle, at the front lines, in the rich countries as well as in the poor."<sup>20</sup> From the beginning Taize was concerned about injustice, oppression, and poverty.

When a local factory threatened not to buy from the farmers in the area so that it could lower prices, the community participated with them in forming a dairy cooperative. Through this cooperation, COPEX, an agricultural cooperative, was organized and is still in existence. In 1965 Taize made a great decision to surrender all its land to COPEX, except its building plot.<sup>21</sup> "Both the gift of land and the reasons for it shed much light on the manner in which the prior and his brothers wished to see the Gospel take root in the life of society."<sup>22</sup> This is just one of many examples that

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<sup>19</sup> Roger of Taize, "Itinerary for a Pilgrim," in Parable of Community, 77.

<sup>20</sup> Roger of Taize, "The Dynamic of the Provisional," in Afire with Love, 20.

<sup>21</sup> Brico, 27-28.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.



Taize has practiced for the outside world: the oppressed and the poor.<sup>23</sup>

Roger thinks the mystery of the church is far vaster than we imagined. We should love our neighbours, whatever their religions or ideological point of views are.<sup>24</sup> The Taize community showed us the hope and possibility to overcome the divisions of the world and become one. Their unity is orientated to the union of all human beings.

### Unity Programs of the Taize Community

The preceding pages presented a survey of some contributions for the unity of the church and the world involved in the ecumenical spirituality promoted and lived by the brothers of Taize. We must now draw attention to some of the most important programs in which the community gives expression to the attitude of unity. From the very beginning the brothers did not pursue just invisible unity, but visible unity in their lives. To promote visible unity, the Taize community made use of some programs through which it could act as a leaven of unity in this world.

### Liturgy

Liturgy is one of the most representative programs for unity at Taize. Taize takes the traditional elements of its liturgy from the heritage of almost all denominations in the twentieth century. The result is that most Christians throughout the world recognize themselves in the liturgy: "The Reformed in the Psalms set to music, the Lutheran in certain of the chorales, the Eastern Orthodox in the Beatitudes and the polyphonic alleluia, the Roman

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<sup>23</sup> Other examples include: solution to the student revolt in Paris, 1968; many celebrations of the Council of Youth opened outside of Taize after 1974; activities of scattered fraternities, and so forth. Ibid., 28, 49-65, 72, 120-22.

<sup>24</sup> Roger of Taize, "Rule of Taize," in Parable of Community, 13.

Catholic in the text of the Eucharist, as well as in some Gregorian chants and the often-sung (in Latin!) *veni creator spiritus*."<sup>25</sup>

The Taize liturgy is based on the ecumenical tradition of the church. The brothers of Taize try to keep the whole liturgy alive by reviewing the liturgy regularly and by removing certain parts and adding new ones. In the Taize liturgy, the elements are used as follows:

Psalms: Introduction – Psalm;

Reading: Old Testament – Gospel – Epistle – Short Reading;

Song: Responses – Hymn;

Prayer: Intercession – Collects – Free Prayer – Blessing<sup>26</sup>

The daily worship services begin with a Psalm, which is sung by everyone. A scripture reading follows.<sup>27</sup>

The response to the reading is another text from the Bible, sung by one of the brothers and repeated in part by the congregation; and then the congregation becomes quiet. That silence is time for personal reflection or

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<sup>25</sup> Brico, 94–95.

<sup>26</sup> Praise God: Common Prayer at Taize, [trans., Emily Chisholm] (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 12. If the office should be shortened, it may be done in one of the following ways:

– Short Office

Introduction – one Psalm – one reading – responsory – versicle – litany – one collect (collect of the week, common collect or Lord's Prayer) – blessing.

– Brief Office

Introduction – Gospel or Epistle – responsory – collect (collect of the week, common collect or Lord's Prayer). The Taize Office (London: Faith Press, 1966), 13–14.

<sup>27</sup> The introduction of the liturgy consists of biblical verses which direct according to the liturgical season. The introduction consists of three elements: (1) two verses of invocation or invitation; (2) one or several verses of a psalm corresponding to the liturgical season, or a few verses from the Prophets or the Gospel; and (3) two concluding verses from the New Testament or Psalms. The Taize Office, 14, 15.

prayer which lasts a long time, at least ten minutes, sometimes more. Then the intercessions begins with litany. After a short collect which changes once a week, specific intentions are mentioned. The service concludes with a hymn and a short prayer by the prior, in which he invokes God's blessing.<sup>28</sup>

### Common Prayer

It is necessary to explain some more about the prayer among the liturgical elements. Whenever people ask Roger what is the most important thing in his life, he replies, "Our common prayer, and in it, the periods of silence."<sup>29</sup> This means that prayer takes priority over everything else in Taize: discussions, social involvement and community life. For the community, prayer is the center of their existence and a means to form their ideal unity. Prayer in common is a fundamental aspect of their life.<sup>30</sup> Prayer in Taize is an important part of the rhythm of a day. "In this way a close bond is created between contemplation and activity, between what they think and what they do."<sup>31</sup>

The brothers of Taize do not consider social concerns and contemplation separately, but link them. They believe if they dedicate themselves only to do activities, they are easily submerged by those things and they lose the fundamental inspiration and energy which at that moment is exactly what they need. On the other hand, the same thing is true for those who lose themselves in contemplation and close their eyes to the suffering around

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 15-17.

<sup>29</sup> Roger of Taize, A Life We Never Dared Hope For, 65.

<sup>30</sup> Praise God: Common Prayer at Taize, 7.

<sup>31</sup> Brico, 87.

them.<sup>32</sup> Prayer has an element of communion, of solidarity with the suffering of the world. The world is found in the heart of the prayer.

They emphasize not only the intellectual side of prayer, but the emotional side. In worship they transcend the limits of their intellect. Prayer brings them into contact with mystery, contemplation. Silence is not just an empty time or listening to the distracting voices within. It is placing oneself in the presence of God. Silence is a continuing dialogue with God through which one can reach oneself. Those who attend prayer services in Taize feel that they are accepted just as they are. They can freely adopt the posture they feel like in praying: kneeling, sitting, bowing down. "Prayer then becomes not only an intellectual exercise but something they do with their whole body."<sup>33</sup>

#### Retreat in Taize

Everyone who visits Taize is advised to stay for a week from one weekend to the next, if possible. In the Taize community, retreat is one of the most important programs through which participants can easily understand the community itself and learn its thought, life, and work. The significant elements of a one-week retreat are as follows:

Registration. When visitors arrive at Taize, they are welcomed at the "reception tent." The brothers of Taize think "It is Christ himself whom we have to receive; so let us learn to be welcoming and be ready to offer our free time. Our hospitality should be generous and discerning."<sup>34</sup> The visitors

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 90-91.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>34</sup> Roger of Taize, "Rule of Taize," in Parable of Community, 39.

also ask whatever they want.<sup>35</sup> Others as well as the brothers of Taize help many visitors: the Protestant Sisters of Grand Champ, Catholic Sisters of St. Charles and of St. Andre, Dominican Sisters from Bonnay, Catholic Franciscans, Orthodox priests, and a group of young laymen.<sup>36</sup>

Choosing districts. There are different kinds of "districts" where they can live corresponding with the way in which the visitors wish to spend the week. In districts the participants eat, sleep and discuss. Some districts are for silence; others are for discussion of certain topics like centering one's life on the living Christ, discovering signs of hope in one's job or profession, seeking a new life-style in solidarity with poorer lands, and so forth.<sup>37</sup>

Discussions. For the discussions each district of twenty or thirty people is generally subdivided into groups of seven to ten people under the direction of a discussion-leader. The groups meet in the districts for discussions, Bible studies, informal conversations, and simply for being together from half past nine to half past eleven in the morning, three to five in the afternoon, and again at a quarter past nine in the evening.<sup>38</sup>

Meeting brothers. Anyone wishing a personal conversation can go to the church between five and six o'clock in the afternoon, where one or more brothers are always available. A much-consulted figure is Brother Roger, who in addition to a few hours in the daytime can be found almost every

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<sup>35</sup> Brico, 133.

<sup>36</sup> Heijke, 147.

<sup>37</sup> Brico, 133, 137.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 135.

evening in the church.<sup>39</sup>

Common Prayer. As we saw in the previous pages, the common prayer of the brothers takes place three times a day. Visitors can join in it, and they can feel free to leave whenever they wish. The brothers have adapted themselves to the visitors in this service and substituted for their usual monastic office a more universal form of prayer which can be assimilated by everyone.

Agape. For a continuation of the unity experienced in the worship, sometimes the brothers of Taize invite some of the visitors to a love feast in which they share the brothers' meal. Even though it is not a Eucharistic supper, it helps the visitors feel in partaking the one loaf that they are made one Body.<sup>40</sup>

People who come to Taize are in search of something beyond themselves. The brothers not only help the visitors perceive a dimension of the church that they had perhaps never before experienced, but they challenge them to reconciliation. The retreat of Taize helps the participants to remove their inveterate prejudices and to discover fellow humans who are on the same boat. After the retreat the visitors leave Taize with impressions and resolutions to break the walls separating the churches and the world.

### Work Communities

Since the fall of 1963 the brothers of Taize have organized a project of "work communities" which began from recognizing that common manual labor supplies "a great value for communication and a strong formative power for

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>40</sup> Heijke, 146-47.

the construction of a genuine community."<sup>41</sup>

Through these work communities the building of the Church of the Reconciliation in Taize and the meeting centers of Taize and Ameugny were built, and similar work was done for the Orthodox center.

The three important elements of work communities are prayer, manual work and study. Common prayer, three times a day, is "the place of true communication with the brothers and of sharing in the essential dimension of their life."<sup>42</sup> And they do manual labor on a construction site four hours each day. "The manual work acts like a melting pot, in which the work community takes shape."<sup>43</sup> Then they spend the remaining hours of the day in study in which an introductory lecture is given and is followed by common reflection in discussion, by individual reading and personal conversations.<sup>44</sup> Those who come to the "work communities" at Taize have an opportunity to examine themselves, to find a genuine community, and commit themselves with renewed boldness. These work communities make a deep impression on the participants and make them the "means of an ecumenical, Christian-religious formation."<sup>45</sup> All these humans return to their homelands bearing the imprint of the ideal for which the community of Taize lives.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 151.

## Fraternities

Fraternities mean temporary settlements that the brothers of Taize create to cope with the limitation of local situations of Taize and to enlarge the dialogue with the world outside Taize. These contacts with the world take the form of travel for study or series of lectures.<sup>46</sup>

A fraternity usually consists of three or four brothers of Taize in a particular country. They try to earn their living in the place. They sing their daily office, to which others are invited. "Hospitality plays an important role in these fraternities, and the brothers like to invite guests at their table."<sup>47</sup> Aside from the improvised or organized reception of visitors, the brothers not only deliver addresses, and organize retreats or prayer meetings, but they labor as silent witnesses in a factory or workshop. Although the character and meaning of each fraternity vary, an element common to all is that "they are centers of common prayer open to everyone."<sup>48</sup>

Some fraternities in non-Christian environments give an opportunity to discover the originality and the appeal of the Gospel. Through fraternities, the Taize brothers not only propagate the doctrine of Christian unity, but the community attunes itself to genuine solidarity with the world.<sup>49</sup> Sometimes they give concrete form to their solidarity with the oppressed by sharing sufferings.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 154-56.

<sup>50</sup> Brico, 121. Since Montceau-les-Mines, the Taize Community has had fraternities in Abidjan, Amersfoort, Bad Boll, Beirut, Calcutta, Chicago,



Everywhere and at all times, they represent the community; the witness of the whole body depends on their attitude. They keep the prior regularly informed about their life. They should not venture into any new project without his agreement, as he is responsible for consulting others. If brothers on a mission fail to keep this close contact, they very soon break the unity of the body.<sup>51</sup> Fraternities do not act independantly, but work in close communion with the Taize community. All of their activities end with reports to the community.

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Chittagong (Bangladesh), Coventry, Davao City (Philippines), Geneva, Hussein-Dey (Algeria), Kigali (Rwanda), Keulen, Lyons, Madison, Marseilles, Mont Beliard, New York, Niamey (Nigeria), Paris, Recife (Brazil), Rome, Santiago, Sheffield, Utrecht, Vaesteras (Sweden), Villigst, and Vitoria (Brazil). Brothers have worked as male nurses in war-torn Algeria, dock workers in Marseilles, and welfare workers among ghetto residents in Chicago. In 1977 a new style was inaugurated, an "itinerant fraternity" composed of two brothers who went to Cameroon and who, instead of settling in one place, keep moving throughout the country, visiting one local church after another in the style of the early Christians. Other brothers were preparing to leave for an extended stay in the United States. All the fraternities keep in regular contact with the prior. Brico, 21.

<sup>51</sup> Roger of Taize, "Rule of Taize," in Parable of Community, 37.

## CHAPTER 6

### Religious Programs for the Recovery of the Korean American Community

In the Los Angeles riots, Korean Americans are victims of a system that is unjust for people of color, and a power structure that has not treated minority and disadvantaged communities on the same footing. Their lives and communities are devalued in this system. To cope with sufferings and brokenness and to prevent the recurrence of a similar riot, Korean Americans need to focus their efforts in correcting the source that victimizes them. At this point of time, however, it is almost impossible for the Korean American community to find any solutions in a political system or institution.

When they no longer feel any hope in the legal system, where do they turn? For Korean Americans there is not any other institution, except the church, which can help them cope with their sufferings. The Korean American churches have played an important role for the community from the beginning of their immigration. The churches have been the center of life in the Korean American community. The fact that these churches exist side by side is a sign of hope. The churches are hope and spiritual energy needed to rebuild for the future. The churches can commit to stand in the breach and help rebuild the community. They can serve as agents of healing the Korean American community, understanding other races and the Korean American community, improving the relationship between races, and constructing a sound multiracial community. In this chapter several programs will be provided that a Korean American church can use for the recovery of the community.

### Programs for the Healing of the Broken Korean Americans

The following programs are to help Korean Americans cope with their sufferings as a result of the Los Angeles riots and to heal their broken life.

#### Quiet Time

Quiet Time means the time that Christians have personal fellowship with God through prayer and the meditation of the Bible. This is necessary for Christians to improve their religious life. Through church history, we can easily find that many faithful Christians had such time. They prayed and meditated on God's word to sustain and reinforce their faith and life. The Taize community has also a similar program -- common prayer. Although common prayer is more liturgical and communal than Quiet Time, both of them are very close in their purpose and contents. Taize considers common prayer composed of meditation, silence, and singing as the most important thing in the community life. For the community, meditation and silence are a continuing dialogue with God through which they can reach themselves. As Taize's common prayer helps participants feel that they are accepted just as they are, so Quiet Time can help us to reach our own sufferings and to heal them through silence and the meditation of God's word. Through Quiet Time we can not only discern the meaning of our sufferings, but God's will for our life. Quiet Time helps to discover the perfection of hope in common with the word of God

#### How to Have Quiet Time

Select your available time and place so that no one can prevent your Quiet Time: at an early hour or at night before going to sleep; in the living room, in the church, or in a park.

- I . Begin with Praise. Praise helps your mind to be open for God and your heart to come into the presence of God.
- II. Seek the Holy Spirit's Help. You can pray like this: "Dear Lord! Open my eyes and heart to your Word, and help me realize its deep meaning in my situation. Let your Word come alive in my life. Through your Word heal my sufferings and help me discover true hope in Jesus Christ, the eternal life."
- III. Listen to God's Word. God desires to reveal God's self to you through the Word (consolation, hope, admonition, plans, ideas, etc.). Have a humble attitude when hearing the Word of God. Read carefully to concentrate on it. You can use three steps to meditate and practice the given biblical text.
  - A. Observation: You should give ear to what the text tells you. Read the text about three times. Through reading it, observe what the text tells you. Observe words, verses, sentences, textual context, and so on. If necessary, refer to various biblical references or commentaries. By reflection on the Word, meditate on suffering, hope, and the promises of God.
  - B. Interpretation: Understand what the text tells you in your own situation. Think over what it means for you.
  - C. Application: Make specific applications. Consider what you should practice in your life. Meditation with no application is like a tree with no fruit. Therefore, you need to write down what needs to be done. Then, what is unclear will become clear and your prayers will become more specific.
- IV. Pray, including the Word for the Day. Ask God to help you practice

what you realized through the meditation of the Word.

V. Share What You Have Experienced. Share with other Christians what happened as a result of applying the Word to your life. Through such sharing, your relationship with your neighbors not only becomes closer in love, but you can help them cope with their own similar sufferings.

### Counseling Preaching

In the Protestant tradition, preaching is one of the most useful and effective tools through which a preacher can heal people in their sufferings. Especially counseling preaching is a more suitable style for the healing of the broken hearers and community in that it begins from human problems, consoles the audience with the Word of God, and helps them to overcome the problems.

Harry Emerson Fosdick, who was professor of practical theology at Union Theological Seminary and pastor of Riverside Church in New York City, considers preaching as "personal counseling on a group basis - nothing else."<sup>1</sup> With counseling preaching Korean American pastors can help their congregations cope with sufferings since counseling preaching is a conversational message through which a preacher can give insights into human problems with the answers provided by the Word of God.

Preachers need to keep two things, at least, in mind in order to make an outline for counseling preaching. At first, the sermon should begin with a life issue, personal or social.<sup>2</sup> Preachers should start the sermon with the

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<sup>1</sup> See Harry Emerson Fosdick, The Living of These Days: An Autobiography (New York: Harper & Bros., 1956), 95; and Clyde E. Fant, Jr. and William M. Pinson, Jr., "Harry Emerson Fosdick," in 20 Centuries of Great Preaching: An Encyclopedia of Preaching, vol. 9 (Waco: Word Books, 1974), 25.

<sup>2</sup> Halford E. Luccock, In the Minister's Workshop (New York:

human dilemma as experienced by the hearer.<sup>3</sup> Preachers are called to reflect upon and to struggle with these various questions in life.<sup>4</sup> Preachers must know the personal or social issues of the hearer because these problems are part of the context that gives meaning to the words that are spoken.<sup>5</sup>

Second, the counseling sermon should turn to the Bible for the principles which could meet the hearer's need. Preachers must try to provide the answer to the problem through the gospel of Christ. Even though all of the answers do not come from the Bible, the themes are there so that the thoughtful preacher of the Scripture can make the connections.<sup>6</sup> After lifting a problem of the hearer and examining it for all of its worst and best aspects, preachers have to "solve it by bringing the saving truth and power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to throw light upon it."<sup>7</sup>

Preachers should explore the Scripture on behalf of the faithful community and the world. They should meditate on the Word with questions and needs of the community in their mind and hearts. They should bring needs of church and world to the text, find the will of God through the

Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1944), 51.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas G. Long, The Witness of Preaching (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1989), 32.

<sup>4</sup> Christine M. Smith, Preaching as Weeping, Confession, and Resistance: Radical Responses to Radical Evil (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Justo L. Gonzalez and Catherine G. Gonzalez, Liberation Preaching: The Pulpit and the Oppressed (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 95.

<sup>6</sup> John Killinger, Fundamentals of Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 12.

<sup>7</sup> Edmund Holt Linn, Preaching as Counseling: The Unique Method of Harry Emerson Fosdick (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1966), 19.

Scripture, and tells the truth toward the community.<sup>8</sup>

### Programs for the Understanding of Other Races

The following programs are designed for Korean Americans to build understanding of other races.

#### Reading and Discussing a Book

**Purpose:** To help understand the historical, cultural and social backgrounds of other races through reading and discussing a book which depicts objectively those races.

**Time:** 4 hours (Friday or Saturday night).

**Materials:** A book about the other race, pen and notebook.

**Numbers:** 7-8 persons. Separate into small groups if the group is larger than 7-8 persons.

#### **Procedure:**

7:00-7:20 Introduce briefly the race which your group will deal with and explain the outline of the book chosen.

7:20-8:20 Assign chapters (or parts) to group members to read alone for one hour during which each one should prepare for a five-minute summary for the group.

8:20-9:00 Listen to chapter presentations.

9:00-9:10 Break Time

9:10-9:40 Meditate on what you heard from presentations.

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<sup>8</sup> See a sample of counseling preaching for the Korean American community hurt in the Los Angeles riots in Appendix A: "Hope Beyond Crises and Sufferings" (Gen. 39:1-3, 20-21; 50:19-20). This sermon for healing in the church can be delivered around the anniversary of the 1992 Rodney King verdict (April 29 - May 2).

9:40–11:00 Discuss what you have realized through reading and meditation: Compare what impressions you had of the race before the evening with what you found out newly and freshly about the race through the book. Talk about how your attitude toward the race has been transformed between before and after this program.

(This program can also be used as a retreat program.)

### The Creation of Lecture

**Purpose:** To help Korean Americans to gain understanding of themselves and other races in a multicultural society, and to gain wisdom to live together with other people.

**Time:** 2 hours

**Numbers:** Any number

**Procedure:**

1. Give a lecture (1 hour).
2. Divide the hearers into small groups of 4 to 6 persons. Let them discuss what they heard and realized in the lecture (30 minutes).
3. Let each group leader summarize and present what has been discussed (30 minutes).

**Contents of Lecture:** Lectures can include several themes as follows:

1. Who Are We?

This theme is for the purpose of helping Korean Americans understand themselves in a multiracial society. At first Korean Americans need to recognize their own identity in order to live harmoniously with other races. Korean Americans come from a country with a homogeneous population



which has little extensive experience in dealing with other racial groups. Korean Americans with such racial experiences need to learn from one another in a multiethnic society. They need to learn one another's cultures, not ignore them. They need to love, not hate.

Through this theme, a lecturer can help Korean Americans realize their own history and nationality and life style in a multiracial society.

## 2. Who Are They?

This theme is to help Korean Americans understand the diversity of the multiracial society. Korean Americans as Angelenos are forced to adopt to a multiplicity of cultures, languages, and communities in their conduct of daily life. Los Angeles is "the most ethnically diverse city in the world."<sup>9</sup> There are no majorities: 40 percent of the population is Latin, 37 percent Anglo and 23 percent African and Asian. Nearly 100 languages are spoken in the city's schools.<sup>10</sup> The gap between rich and poor is most evident in the United States, and racial relations are also most complex: Mexicans, Central Americans, Hispanics, Iranians, Russians, Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, and so forth.<sup>11</sup>

Such diversity can generate a certain amount of tension. Intolerance of other groups, cultures, and nationalities is often bred by ignorance of diversity. In Los Angeles, this ignorance is further exacerbated by the natural tendency to form ethnic enclaves which insulate and isolate groups

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<sup>9</sup> Michael Meyer, "Los Angeles Will Save Itself," Newsweek, 18 May 1992, 46.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

from each other. This theme can provide a foundation for an understanding of living in a multiracial and multiethnic society. It can help Korean Americans to reduce tensions with other races and to build understanding.

### 3. How Can We Live Together?

This theme emphasizes the unity of all races so that they may coexist in the country. Since the American society is multicultural, there is a greater need to respect fellow Americans and practice tolerance no matter how different they are from others. Americans should uphold the principle of equality -- to reaffirm and cherish the value of equality among all people. The Los Angeles riots must not be used to separate one race from the other. Rather, it must be used to unite all Americans.

Each race of America contributes to a nation of nations, a people of peoples who came from all corners of the world to bear and defend the one and the common name -- America. Unlike other nations, America is a diversity country woven together into unity under the principle that all humans are created equal. The upholding of the principle must go on. It is for all, not just the ones they want and need, but all whom God has chosen, and to whom God's open invitation is extended.

This theme helps audiences to learn the mind of reconciliation through which isolation and separation end, and through which the Korean American community and Los Angeles can recover and prosper.

#### Programs for Improvement in Relationships Between Races

The following programs are to help Korean Americans recover their relationship with other races.

#### Visiting Other Communities

Visiting other racial communities is a good chance to change one's

wrongly fixed thoughts about others and to improve mutual relationships. A sound relationship between different ethnic groups is built on the willingness to listen to what others say about themselves and to see other ways of living. Visiting another community is a concrete expression to carry out that willingness. Just visiting can be considered a sign of solidarity. Whoever has made up one's mind can simply practice such a program individually or with a group. Two following cases are good examples which show the effect of visiting other communities.

Example 1. Tong Soo Chung, a founder of the Korea–America Coalition, visited to understand the African American community. Then he confessed as follows:

I went to the First AME Church a couple of Sundays ago for the first time . . . . And I was worried about what the congregation might think; but they are Christians and I'm a Christian – so I just decided to go. And it was a great experience. I went back last Sunday, and I am going to go as often as I can so that I can try and understand where they are coming from. I'm still hopeful. There's still idealism left in me.<sup>12</sup>

Example 2. Kaia Niambi Shivers, former student body president at Washington Preparatory High School, is another person who has experienced the importance of visiting a different community. Shivers visited South Korea in the fall of 1992.<sup>13</sup> That trip helped overcome her cultural misunderstanding. After her trip, Shivers realized conflicts between African Americans and Korean Americans are based on a lack of communication and cultural ignorance and misunderstanding of both groups. Shivers said when

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<sup>12</sup> Steve Proffitt, "Seeking to Coalesce the Korean American Community," Korea Times, 8 June 1992, 6.

<sup>13</sup> Jake Doherty, "A Round-Trip Ticket to Greater Understanding," Los Angeles Times, 16 July 1993, B3.

she went to Korea she found that she and Koreans had so much in common: "African Americans and Koreans share a history of hardship and oppression, a strong work ethic, respect for education, a willingness to sacrifice for their children and a deep spirituality."<sup>14</sup> Most people misunderstand others because they do not have a chance to see the culture and background of other races. Visiting programs help to enlighten people about other communities and cultures.

### Weekend Retreat

**Purpose:** To help participants understand each other and recover the right relationship among different racial communities.

**Time:** The retreat will last from Friday evening through mid-afternoon on Sunday. Be flexible with time and scheduling.

**Place:** Retreat Center.

**Numbers:** Any number.

**Participants:** People from all races.

### Weekend Retreat Schedule

#### Friday

**4:00 P.M.** Arrive at a retreat center and unload. Spend the next hour getting settled and becoming familiar with the surroundings.

**5:00 P.M.** All meet in the assembly hall for a short opening service and a discussion of last minute details and questions

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

about the retreat.

5:40 P.M. Explain Angel Game.

6:00 P.M. Divide all participants into several groups: Each group consists of 7-8 persons. Have a group meeting for one hour. Let each member introduce oneself and share something interesting: Who he/she is; Where he/she comes from; What brought him/her here; Whether he/she speaks any other languages except English; What his/her expectations are for this retreat; and so on.

7:00 P.M. Dinner.

8:00 P.M. Praise.

8:30 P.M. See the film "4.29" (30 minutes). Discuss what each one in the group felt and realized through the film. For the whole meeting, one member of each group presents what the group discussed.

9:30 P.M. Love Feast.

10:30 P.M. Have prayer meeting as a group. Share one by one what was the most impressive programs of the day and pray for the unity and reconciliation of the mutiracial society.

11:00 P.M. Be off for a good night's sleep.

#### Saturday

7:00 A.M. Do Quiet Time.

8:00 A.M. Breakfast.

9:00 A.M. Praise.

9:30 A.M. Lecture.

11:30 A.M. Prepare for skit presentation in each group.

12:30 P.M. Lunch and free time.

2:00 P.M. Activities for the recovery of relationship.

4:30 P.M. Practice the skit in each group.

5:30 P.M. Read a pamphlet and discuss.

(cf. reading and discussing a Book)

7:00 P.M. Dinner.

8:00 P.M. Worship.

9:00 P.M. Skit Presentations.

10:30 P.M. Prayer Meeting.

11:00 P.M. Good Night.

#### Sunday

7:00 A.M. Do Quiet Time.

8:00 A.M. Breakfast.

9:00 A.M. Praise.

9:30 A.M. Designing an Ideal Town.

11:30 A.M. Closing Service.

12:30 P.M. Lunch.

1:30 P.M. Angel Game.

2:00 P.M. Depart from the retreat center.

(Free Time is necessary not only to stretch muscles, but  
to allow the ideas being presented to soak in.)

#### Weekend Retreat Programs

##### 1. Angel Game

Purpose: To give participants a chance to practice and learn to  
love others.

**Time:** Throughout the entire retreat.

**Materials:** Envelopes and pens.

**Numbers:** All participants.

**Procedure:**

- Prepare envelopes for as many as the number of retreat participants.
- Write each participant's name secretly in an envelope.
- Let participants pick up only one envelope. If anyone takes his/her own name, let him/her try again.
- Each participant (Angel) will be assigned a human whom he/she should serve during the retreat.
- Throughout the retreat each participant (Angel) should serve secretly the human whose name he/she picked up.
- Everyone is both a Angel who has to serve someone and a human who is to be served by someone..
- After closing service, let each participant guess the identity of his/her Angel.

## 2. Love Feast

**Purpose:** To provide the participants an opportunity for experiencing fellowship and solidarity.

**Time:** 1 hour.

**Materials:** Table, bread, cups, soft drink, candles and piano (or key board).

**Procedure:**

- Prelude
- Hymn ----- "Bless the Lord, My Soul"

- Invocation ----- John 17:11, 21-23
- Hymn ----- "Can It Be True?"
- Scripture Reading ----- John 15: 9-14  
(Let all participants close their eyes, empty their minds and hearts, pay attention to the word of God and meditate on it.)
- Sermon
- Hymn ----- "Oh I Love You with the Love of the Lord"
- Breaking Bread and Sharing Cups
- Fellowship  
(Let all say personally to everybody, "Peace be with you."  
They may shake hands or hug. Let all say a word of blessing and a word of love to each other.)
- Prayer  
(Let all pray for other races and other communities for which they want to pray.)
- Testimony  
(Share experiences that they have had overcoming tension or difficulties in the multiracial society.)
- Hymn ----- "The Bond of Love"
- Sing songs taking one another by the hand and making a circle.

### 3. Skit Presentation

**Purpose:** To help participants understand other cultures through skits which introduce each race's peculiar tradition and culture.

**Time:** 90 minutes.



**Materials:** Costume and folk song.

**Procedure:**

**a. Preparation**

- (1) Each group should choose one race and study it detail: its history, tradition, customs, culture, nationality and so on.
- (2) Write a play or skit. Cast each group member in appropriate parts.
- (3) Create and rehearse a skit.

**b. Presentation**

- (1) Wear and show one's costume to participants.
- (2) Sing a favorite folk song of the race.
- (3) Act out the skit for 10 minutes.

**4. Activities for the Recovery of Relationship**

Some of the following activities can be used at the retreat.

**a. Breaking Circle**

**Purpose:** To help individuals feel solitude outside a group and realize the importance of solidarity within a group.

**Time:** 40 minutes.

**Numbers:** 15–20 persons.

**Procedure:**

- Create the tightest possible “Huddle”
- One person stays outside the circle, and tries to break into the circle.
- The circle should try to keep tight and block the person from coming in.
- Each person should try once.

– Feedback

- . Discuss what you felt about your own actions and what you felt about others' actions.
- . Comment on what you wish to direct towards others.
- . React honestly and sincerely to comments.
- . Everyone should participate if possible.

**b. Bamboo Boat**

**Purpose:** To help individuals have a communal consciousness.

**Time:** 30 minutes.

**Numbers:** 14–16 persons.

**Materials:** 1 blanket per group.

**Procedure:**

- Spread a blanket on the floor.
- Imagine that you are stranded on a vast ocean, and you must stay on the boat to survive.
- Consider the blanket as a bamboo boat.
- Think about how you can get everyone in your group into the boat. If all members get into the boat, get the blanket folded in half and try again.
- Every time everybody tries to get into the boat, it gets smaller.
- Feedback.

**c. Building a Pyramid**

**Purpose:** To encourage participants to construct a sound community, even though it is difficult.

**Time:** 30 minutes.

Numbers: 14–16 persons.

Procedure:

- Discuss how to build a four-story pyramid.
- Try to build the pyramid within the group.
- You get 2 chances.
- Feedback.

d. Falling

Purpose: To help individuals trust in other people around themselves.

Time: 30 minutes.

Numbers: 7–8 persons.

Procedure:

- Sit in two lines facing each other and hold the hands across from you.
- First person stands with his back towards the bed of hands.  
The person does not look back.
- He/She then falls straight back into the arms.
- If the knees bend or the hips drop, he/she has failed. Body must be kept erect.
- Everyone in group goes once.
- Feedback.

e. Group Drawing

Purpose: To help participants understand the importance of the individual in a community and recognize that a community can do things which an individual cannot do.

Time: 50 minutes.

Numbers: 7–8 persons.

Materials: Some sheets of drawing paper, colored pens, and tape.

Procedure:

- Tape drawing paper on the wall in front of the group.
- For a while, think about what you want to draw on the paper.
- Without discussion, each person in the group goes to the wall and draws.
- After the first person is done, the second person adds whatever he/she wishes to the drawing.
- Continue until the paper is full or the group agrees the drawing is finished.
- Remember, no talking during exercise.
- Feedback: Explain the meaning behind his/her own contribution (or inspiration for it).

## 5. Worship

**Purpose:** To call participants to God's ideal of breaking down racial barriers, to help broaden their hearts and minds for other races and to challenge them to grow in the love for others.

**Time:** 1 hour.

**Numbers:** Any number.

**Procedure 1**

- Call to Worship
- Praise of God
- Prayer of Confession
- Words of Assurance

- Scripture Readings
- Sermon<sup>15</sup>
- General Prayer
- Offering
- Commitment of Oneself to God
- Benediction

(Several songs or other music are usually included)

#### Precedure 2

- Prelude
- Chores
- Hymn
- Invocation
- Testimony
- Offffering
- Chorus
- Scripture Reading
- Prayer of Confession
- Hymn
- Sermon
- Invitation Hymn
- Benediction
- Postlude

#### 6. Designing an Ideal Town

Purpose: To help participants have a vision for an ideal town of a

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<sup>15</sup> See a sample sermon in Appendix B: "We Are All One" (John 4:3-42).

multiracial society and encourage them to work toward it in their own lives.

Time: 2 hours.

Materials: Pens, paper, drawing paper, colored pens, and tape.

Numbers: 7-8 persons.

Procedure:

- Tell each member that he/she is to describe a town. It is to be an ideal town which should be built in the multiracial society someday.
  - Encourage participants to get as specific as they want.
  - After about 30 minutes, share each one's design of the town and make a common group design.
  - Draw a picture of an ideal town on the basis of the group's design.
  - Gather together all groups.
  - Present each group's design and explain its picture.
  - Discuss how they can construct an ideal town in their society.
- Let them tell practical and possible things.

#### Programs for the Construction of Community

Without the recovery and construction of a sound society, it is difficult for a community to recover completely in the society in which many different communities are involved. The authentic recovery of the Korean American community is available through right relationships with other communities and in the construction of a sound society. In the preceding pages several programs were introduced to improve the relationship between Korean Americans and other races. Here a couple of programs will be suggested to

recover and construct other communities which are closely related to the Korean American community.

### Mission House

An activity of Taize, fraternity, gives insight of a mission house operation. This is a program to shape a healthy society, and a program which a large local church or a denomination can perform, because it needs large expenditures and several workers. The program needs a house and three or four mission workers. The church can construct new housing or rehabilitate existing housing in a particular area like South Central Los Angeles. Mission workers should be persons who have worked in urban areas, or who have been trained by an experienced urban missionary.

The character and meaning of each mission house can vary according to its surroundings. An element common to all, however, is that they should be centers of worship and fellowship open to everyone of the area. Mission workers are to deliver the Gospel of Christian Unity, to listen to the voices of the people, to foster relationships between the church and the people, and to facilitate sustainable solidarity between the church and communities in the area. If a mission house is built in non-Christian environments, it helps residents discover the appeal of the Gospel.

In order to accomplish these purposes, the team can invite people to the worship and to the table, deliver addresses and organize retreats. With the help of local churches they can also provide some of these activities as follows: day-care, schooling, food supplies for homeless people, a credit union for small businesses, an entrepreneurs' seminar, and so on. Through a mission house, the mission team should find out fundamental problems and needs of people in the area, suggest religious solutions to them, open

programs to cope with them, and encourage local churches to participate in the programs.

### Cooperative Efforts

To shape a healthy society, a local church or a mission house can open cooperative programs together with people in the area. For example, the church can open a day-care cooperative, if lack of affordable child care is a central concern and a deterrent to people in the work force and those who want to work. The program cannot only create jobs, but provide a solution to the child-care problem in the area. The cooperative is to give several people who already care for children, including a few women on welfare, a chance to run their own day-care business. The church or mission house can help rehabilitate houses that can be used for day-care facilities. Church buildings or mission houses also can be used.

The women should be carefully chosen and then trained in all aspects of child care, from nutrition to safety. They are going to provide day-care service to the local community and earn a modest living. This program needs to be sponsored in part by a local church or denomination. It enables congregations to take an active role within their local communities. The program encourages congregations to work with ecumenical partners to advocate change. By focusing on root causes of community problems and joining to bring about change, congregations not only become engaged and renewed, but the church can help to shape a sound society.



## CHAPTER 7

### Summary and Conclusions

As mentioned in the introduction, this project deals with the problem of brokenness experienced in the Korean American community from the Los Angeles riots, a community model through which Korean Americans can cope with their sufferings and losses, and religious programs for the healing and rehabilitation of the broken community.

Although some define the conflict between African Americans and Korean Americans as the cause of the riots which laid the city of Los Angeles in ashes, the core problems of the unrest are racism, poverty, alienation and neglect by the political and economic system controlled by the power elite. These are the same causes of the 1965 Watts riots. A similar riot happened again in twenty-seven years because the American society did not solve the problems of the Watts riots. If the American society does not settle the root causes of the riots, no one can be sure that another crisis will not happen in the near future.

Even though the essential causes of the Los Angeles riots were not the conflict between African and Korean Americans, from the 1992 riots Korean Americans have suffered more than any other Americans. After four days of torching, looting, killing and madness, Korean Americans' lives were laid in ruins. They are still suffering not only from economic losses, but mental depression. The reason why Korean Americans were made the victim of the riots is because of their economic and social status as middle-class minority merchants, the biased reporting of the media, the irresponsibility of police and the justice system, the geographical proximity of Koreatown to the epicenter

of the riots, and misunderstandings between Korean and African Americans.

To solve the problems of a multiracial society, this project has attempted to find a religious solution through the Taize community. We can no longer count on purely political, social, and economic solutions. The fact is the American society could not cope with the problems merely with the secular solutions suggested after the Watts riots. The religious solution can be more effective than any other solutions in that it has a religious community model which was built on a situation of the world split apart through World War II and worked for healing the broken world. Even though Brother Roger despaired of the divisions among Christians and in the world, he could recover the broken church and world with his positive experience through his family and monastic tradition. Roger could find the possibility of transforming the society through his community life. Roger's thought and common life, summarized as unity or reconciliation, give insights through which the Korean Americans can contribute to the recovery of their community and the multiracial society of Los Angeles. Especially unity programs of the Taize community can practically help the Korean American community to act as a leaven of unity in the broken society.

For the Taize community, liturgy and common prayer are the center of their existence and a means to form their ideal unity. They do not consider social concerns and contemplation separately. For them, prayer has an element of communion, of solidarity with the suffering of the world. The liturgical program of Taize suggests to Korean Americans some programs with which they can cope with their sufferings as a result of the Los Angeles riots and heal their broken lives.

Retreat in Roger's community is one of the most important programs

through which participants can easily learn Taize's thought and life and work. The retreats of Taize challenges participants toward reconciliation. It is useful for the participants to remove their inveterate prejudices and to discover fellow humans who are in the same boat. Such a retreat program can help Korean Americans to build understanding of other races and to recover a relationship with them.

Moreover, the program of fraternities, created to enlarge the dialogue with the world outside Taize, can help Korean Americans to recover and construct neighboring communities which are closely related to the Korean American community.

Finally, I do not believe that the several programs provided in this project can offer a complete solution for the problems of a multiracial society. These programs are just actual examples that a Korean American church can use for the recovery of the community. I hope that more religious leaders will create more suitable and effective programs for healing the Korean American community, understanding other races, improving the relationships among races, and constructing a sound multiracial community.

## APPENDIX A

## Sample Sermon 1

by

Byeong Yong Moon

Hope Beyond Crises and Sufferings

(Gen. 39:1-3, 20-21; 50:19-20)

Chung Lee, a Christian elder, was a "good neighbor." He was a man who tirelessly gave back to his community. He had 15-year track record as a Watts grocer. The model merchant was polite. He employed local blacks. He sponsored Little League baseball teams. He donated to black politicians. He went to his customers' funerals. Lee also was active in promoting racial harmony as co-chairman of the Black-Korean Alliance in the mid-1980s. He was often quoted and profiled in the mainstream media.

Yet, in the Los Angeles riots, all this was not enough to save his Watts Market. On April 29 last year, a mob numbering in the hundreds looted his market. After emptying the shelves, they vandalized the property and set it on fire. The store suffered \$1.5 million in damages. Two other members of Lee's family also lost their businesses during the riots. It was a bitter and terrible crisis.

We can naturally speak of hope in our lovely experiences. We can see possibility in good season. Yet when darkness and disaster come, we commonly cry, "I have no hope. There is no possibility." When difficult times, economic hardships, business setbacks, sicknesses, sorrows, heartbreaks, and crises come to us, we often feel like we've struck out and failed.

One Korean American whose shop was looted and heavily damaged in the Los Angeles riots said, "That was part of myself. That store was like my own body. When my son and I went down there, it was almost all gone. I was angry. I was mad and crying. My dream was completely shattered."

Well, have you ever felt like that?

This morning we want to study the kind of person who in such difficult situations did not lose hope, but had hope and realized it throughout his life. We start far away from here, in Egypt some thirty-six centuries ago, where Joseph, facing a desperate situation, did not lose his hope.

Joseph was a dreamer. He had a great dream: his brothers' sheaves gathered around and bowed down to his own sheaf; the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to him. Because of his dream, Joseph was hated and sold by his brothers to traders for twenty pieces of silver. He was taken to Egypt. At seventeen years of age, he was separated miserably from his lovely father and hometown. He was sold into slavery. It was bitter. It was a serious crisis for Joseph. He as a slave worked hard in Potiphar's house. His master saw that Joseph was a faithful man. So he made Joseph overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. Joseph became a successful man. Almost everything was good. At that time, however, other sufferings were waiting for him. His master's wife attempted to seduce him day after day. Joseph refused again and again. He could not sin against God. Although Joseph kept himself from the temptation, his master's wife told a lie against him. His master put him into the prison. It was bitter. It was a serious crisis for him. It was the terrible sufferings in which common people could not help losing hope.

Joseph, however, did not lose his hope. Instead, Joseph realized his hope through his sufferings.

Far from being merely thirty-six centuries old, that situation is here with us now.

We have hope in lovely things. Yea! Hope is in life's lovely things. But sooner or later all of us come to the situation in which we must have hope in suffering. How we admire people who do that!

Lincoln was a very unhappy man. His first sweetheart died before he was able to marry her. And his marriage to Mary Todd would have been enough to destroy any man with less courage and determination than Lincoln. Historians agree that had Lincoln been happily married, he would never have become president. Out of his failure and unhappiness in marriage he was able to give his life to a great cause. He was a great man who did a great thing in spite of his suffering. Not to lose hope where Joseph or Lincoln did not lose hope, however, that calls for insight.

Today we all need that insight. Our whole era is tragic, desperately tragic. How can we have a dream here?

Yet some of the most wonderful possibilities in history have been found in just such situations.

Well, what went on inside Joseph that made possible his having hope in his sufferings?

First, Joseph had a mind to turn crises and suffering into opportunities. When he was sold by his brothers and taken to Potiphar, it was surely experiencing terrible suffering in his life. He became a slave in a foreign land. He could not find any person who could encourage and support him. He became completely alone. That might have meant for him nothing but

discouragement and despair. Yet he met this situation with courage and fidelity which were to turn crises into opportunities for ultimate good. He did not give himself up to despair, but made the most of his suffering for his life and future. He served Potiphar in such a way that he not only found grace in Potiphar's sight, but the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake.

What about us? When we come to a crisis, how do we respond to it? Frequently we try to escape from it. It is human nature to want to escape or run from suffering, but doing this doesn't help us overcome it. Sometimes we learn too late that what we escaped to is worse than what we escaped from.

It's interesting to note that Koreans have two syllables for the word "crisis". "Crisis" in English is "위기" in Korean. One means danger; the other, opportunity. How right they are! In every crisis there is a danger of being defeated or the opportunity for a better future. We need to realize that we have a choice in our crisis. Our difficulties can make us bitter or better. They can become a stumbling block or a stepping stone. They can make us resentful or we can see in them an opportunity to be creative. The choice, however, is ours. Obviously, success isn't the absence of failure. It is having the determination to never quit because "quitters never win and winners never quit." Almost every person who has achieved anything worthwhile with his or her life has not only experienced failure but experienced it many times.

Demosthenes, the famous Greek orator, failed before he became famous. His father died when he was only seven. His father left him a wealthy estate. At age eighteen, through public debate, he sought to claim his estate

from his dishonest guardians. Unfortunately, not only was he shy and retiring, but he also had a speech impediment, so he failed in trying to prove his right of ownership

Without doubt this failure provided the motivation that gave him the determination to persevere until he became the most famous political orator in antiquity. Nobody knows who received his estate, but 2,300 years later we still remember the story about Demosthenes.

In order to expand the application of this to ourselves, we need to look at our situation! True, it is hard to have hope and possibility here. Well, we can start. We have a choice. We can see an opportunity in our sufferings and failures. We are in the same situation as Joseph when he tried to turn his crises and suffering into opportunities.

No matter how badly or how many times we fail, we are never a failure providing we get up just one more time when we fall down. Furthermore, like a high jumper, we never discover our full potential until we reach our point of failure.

Second, Joseph relied faithfully on God who would use his suffering to accomplish the good will of God.

In spite of his serious suffering, Joseph could have hope to overcome his crisis through trusting God. He worked not only as a slave in Potiphar, but he remained in prison. All people around him "saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord caused all his work to prosper in his hands." Even though he had no human help, he always recognized that God was with him. Joseph could have communicated with God. He could cope with his crisis by God's grace. Under the mighty hand of God, no disaster could dismay him and beat him down.



When Joseph was put into the prison as the result of his refusing the temptation of his master's wife, it must have seemed to him the bitterest. The crisis he faced was the more crucial because it seemed so contradictory. In his hometown he had not been without fault. There was some reason why his brothers had turned against him. But how about this suffering related with a vile woman? He was betrayed by the woman's treachery. He was punished and imprisoned not because he had been evil but because he had been innocent. In the face of such injustice as that, he might have been tempted to curse both humans and God. But Joseph still believed that the Lord was with him. Since he bore himself as a man accountable to God, he had the quality that "gave him favor in the sight of the chiefjailer." Since he relied faithfully on God, he could become even prime minister and save his numerous people from the famine.

And so it is with each of us. No matter what happens to us, God wants to use our suffering to achieve God's holy works.

If we are going through a time of sickness, sorrow, depression, financial setback, a broken relationship, or feel we have failed in some way, can we accept that God wants to use our suffering to accomplish God's good will? Can we ask God to help us see what we might be contributing to our situation?

For all who trust their life to God and ask God to use their struggles to fulfill God's plan, hope will remain continuously and it will be realized in due time.

Perhaps there is no greater way to overcome crises than to know what God wants us to do with our life. God wants us to achieve something worthwhile. When we are living in harmony with God's will, we can know

that we have God on our side and that God will give us the faith, courage, and determination to go on.

If you feel you have failed, be encouraged. Now's the time to give God a chance. "God will mend even a broken heart if you'll give God all the pieces." God calls us all to follow God. Why not respond to God's call and ask God to come into your life? God can make a much better job of our life than we can if we will trust it to God. For those who trust in God, failure is never forever.

I have quoted elder Lee, in the introduction, who had a terrible suffering in the Los Angeles riots. Lee was a faithful Christian. He knew that God was with him in the sunlight or in the shadow. So, Lee did not lose his hope in spite of his serious crisis. He said, "a small ray of hope is arising from the tragedy. There is some hope left." Since he did not lose faith in God who led Joseph's life, he could have hope even in the ashes in which most people lost their dreams.

Friday and Sunday come to us once a week. These days are deeply meaningful. They symbolize something special. Friday is the day of crisis. It is the day of discouragement and depression. On Friday our hope, Jesus Christ, was crucified on the cross. On Friday our dreams were broken, our hopes dashed. Jesus' disciples believed he was the Messiah and that he would usher in the kingdom of God. Peace and prosperity would come for all. Justice would reign. Things Would be made right. But those hopes had been smothered by the execution that took place on the cross. Their Messiah, their teacher, their hope was dead.

What about our hopes and dreams today? Dreams of happiness and success. High hopes for our career and family. We are on the same boat

with the disciples. Frequently we live in the shadow of Friday. Joseph had been living in the shadow of broken dreams. Lincoln had been living in the shadow of discouragement. Chung Lee had been living in the shadow of dashed hopes. On Friday we are depressed. Friday, however, is not the end. Sunday is coming to us. In the context of depression, comes the Lord of Easter. Death is not the final word. Depression is not forever. Crisis does not win out. Easter says, "Yes, there is hope!" Hope for life and hope even for death.

It was Friday, and Jesus was on the cross. But Sunday is coming. It was Friday, and Joseph was sold into slavery and was put into the prison. But Sunday is coming. It was Friday, and Lincoln was discouraged. But Sunday is coming. It was Friday, and Lee lost his whole property. But Sunday is coming. Yes, there is hope, because Sunday is here, because Christ the Lord has risen from the dead.

## APPENDIX B

## Sample Sermon 2

by

Byeong Yong Moon

We Are All One (John 4:3-42)

During the civil-rights march on Washington in 1963 Martin Luther King, Jr. stood in front of thousands of people and shared his dream. "I have a dream" said King, "that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today."

Five years later, on April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee, Martin Luther King, age thirty-nine, was assassinated. Racial violence followed and continues even today. We still have a race problem. We have a problem in America and we have a problem in our community.

All of us can never forget the riots that shook Los Angeles in the spring of 1992. When we heard the jury's verdicts of four Los Angeles police officers charged with the beating of Rodney Glen King, most of us were stunned, shocked and outraged. We were speechless. Someone said, "Even in South Africa, white police officers are punished for beating blacks." From that night angry protesters grew progressively more violent, smashing windows along the way, hurling rocks and bottles at passing cars, looting stores and torching some buildings. The worst riots of the century had

begun. Those days and nights of the riots were a mixture of tension, horror and surrealism. Our brothers and sisters lost their business, jobs, or lives. We saw the terrible scenes on TV. When I saw crowds of looters swarm the stores, and destroy, plunder, and fire them in Korea Town, I as a Korean got very angry and hated them and cursed them. Some of us had a mind to kill them.

We don't have to look far, do we? We don't have to look any further than our own hearts. Each of us, to some degree, struggles with racism. I don't pretend that I'm free of prejudice. I'm not. None of us are. But that doesn't change the fact that the world is divided into pieces in race relations.

Our problem isn't new. All through history, people have had a hard time getting along with people different from themselves. In Jesus' day the problem was not blacks and whites and yellows, but Jews and Gentiles.

One of my favorite stories in the New Testament comes from the fourth chapter of John. In this passage, Jesus confronts the disciples with their sin of racism. We read the story. Jesus told the disciples that "He had to go through Samaria" (v.4, NRSV). The disciples hated Samaritans. They couldn't believe Jesus was actually going to go to Samaria. They could not understand Jesus' action, because Jews antagonized Samaritans for several hundred years. They condemned Samaritans.

There is an old story of the quarrel between Jews and Samaritans. Away back about 720 B.C. the Assyrians had invaded the northern kingdom of Samaria and had captured and transported practically a great deal of Samaritans to their country. Some of the people of the northern kingdom were left. Almost inevitably they began to intermarry with the incoming foreigners. Jews thought Samaritans lost their racial purity and it was an

unforgivable crime. From that time Samaritans lost their right to be called Jews at all. Even though a like invasion and defeat happened to the southern kingdom, its inhabitants did not lose their identity, but remained stubbornly Jewish.

When the exiles returned from Babylon to Jerusalem by the grace of a Persian king, the immediate task of Jews was to repair and rebuild the shattered temple. Samaritans offered their help in this sacred task, but Jews rejected it. Samaritans turned bitterly against Jews of Jerusalem. About 450 B.C. a quarrel between them took place, and it was as bitter as ever in the days of Jesus. After that quarrel, several feuds happened again and again between them. They hated and cursed each other. They showed enmity toward each other. For Jews, Samaritans were their eternal enemy.

Well, Jesus went to just this Samaria. Jesus not only went to Samaria, but he talked to a Samaritan woman. You know the story. Jesus went to her town and even stayed two more days. In those days it was beyond imagination that a Jewish man met and talked to a Samaritan woman, and even stayed in her town. Jesus, however, tried to do such things at great personal risk. What was the result? Many people believed and the disciples learned an important lesson in race relations.

If we want, we can throw the sin of racism away. The gospel is big enough to overcome our prejudice and fear and hatred. But how? How can we do this? We are able to learn from Jesus how to cope with racism in the world.

At first, we need to get to understand people of other races, so that we may cope with divisions among races. Understanding of each other is very important and essential to solve problems in human relations. Without

understanding of other people, we can not recover a relationship split apart between races. Understanding is the starting point of the solution of the problem.

Jesus understood Samaritans' situation better than any other one. Even though his disciples and Jews hated and antagonized and contemned Samaritans, Jesus understood enough their suffering and agony: It was almost inevitable that they began to inter-marry with the incoming foreigners, and lost their racial purity. In the sight of Jesus, both Jews and Samaritans were sinners in front of God. Both of them needed God's love and salvation. Both of them were also God's children, created as the image of God. Jesus did not fall into a narrow nationalism or sectarianism. Jesus opened his mind towards Samaritans and understood their situation in their place. So he could cope with the nationalism and sectarianism.

In fact, it is not easy to understand other people. Sometimes we don't understand even our own family.

When I was a teenager, I hated my father because he did not care for my family, but gave pain to us. My father enjoyed drinking and gambling. Even though he worked hard and made money, he did not use it for my family. He spent all his money on drinking and gambling. Almost every day he drank. Whenever he got drunk, he bothered us. For a long time I could not understand the actions of my father. As I grew up, I began to resist him. I expressed very often my discontent with him. I argued against him. Sometimes, words between my father and me ran high. My mother began to worry about it. One day my mother called and told me about the childhood of my father. It was the first time I had heard about my father's childhood. The story was as follows: My grandparents lived in a traditional

Korean country. They worked hard, but they were still poor, because in those days the economic condition of Korea was not good. My father was born as the second son of my grandparents. Even though my father was poor, he lived his childhood happily before 8 years old. When he was 8 years old, he had a serious misfortune. His mother, my grandmother, passed away from a severe disease. And after two years, my grandfather also passed away. My father lost both of his parents before ten years old. Suddenly he became an orphan. He felt seriously lonely. He led a solitary life day by day. When he was fourteen years old, he could not bear any longer the life of his hometown, and decided to depart for somewhere. From that time, my father began to lead his wandering life. He moved from here to there, and began to drink and gamble in order to forget his loneliness and solitude. As soon as I heard the sad story of my father's boyhood, I was touched with pity for him. I began to understand his actions one by one. I supposed how if I were in my father's situation. From that time, I tried to talk with my father at every opportunity. The relationship between my father and me was made better.

Not to mention understanding of other people, it was difficult to improve the relationship between even father and son. Without understanding of other people's situation, we can not improve the relationship split apart between them and us.

Second, when divisions bring things to a standstill, it is very important to visit and listen to one another, and to celebrate the paschal mystery together. Without visiting and forgiving others, no one can recover the relationship with them.

Jesus broke down barriers between Jews and Samaritans, and visited



these people. In the time of Jesus there were three definite divisions of territory. In the extreme north lay Galilee; in the extreme south lay Judaea; and in between lay Samaria. The quickest way from Judaea to Galilee lay through Samaria. The other route was to cross the Jordan, go up the eastern side of the river to avoid Samaria, recross the Jordan north of Samaria and then enter Galilee. This was a route which took twice as long. In spite of its shorter distance, most Jews did not use the first one, because there was a centuries-old feud between Jews and Samaritans. Jesus, however, took intentionally the way through Samaria from Judaea to Galilee. Jesus did not wait for Samaritans' visitation, but visited first to them to recover the old divisions. He met a Samaritan women and began to talk to her. She turned in astonishment. She said to Jesus, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a women of Samaria?" Because there was no kind of coming and going at all between Jews and Samaritans. Jesus went first to Samaria.

We also have to visit some people, or some race who have trouble with us. As God first came and forgave us, so we should first visit and forgive those who have trouble with us. No matter who caused divisions between us and other people, once the relationship is split apart, it causes damage to both of us and to the communities to which we belong.

When I worked in a church in Korea, I served the church with several other coworkers. On the whole we worked well together for a long time. One day, however, an unexpected thing happened between a woman coworker and me. The woman coworker was in charge of the kindergarten of the church, and I worked for children who were 9 and 10 years old. A few week before the unexpected thing happened, one teacher of the kindergarten

came to me, and asked whether she might work at my class. At that time my class needed a pianist, and she was a good pianist. So I allowed her to work at my class, without discussion with the coworker in charge of the kindergarden, because I thought she had already told the woman coworker about her moving into my class. A few weeks after she began to work in my class, the woman coworker came to see me, and suddenly got angry with me. She made a protest to me against my decision. At first I could not understand why she was so angry. I asked her why. She expressed her mind and discontent with me. She was thinking I took the woman teacher to my class at my own will. In fact, however, I did not take her to my class at my own will, but she wanted to work and I just allowed her to do so. I thought she misunderstood something. I explained, but she did not understand the situation that the woman teacher came to my class. After that happening, our relationship became worse and worse. We kept away from each other. We avoided meeting each other. I was afflicted with that. I could not endure the mental troubles. I prayed many times for the problem. Whenever I prayed, the Holy Spirit made me realize that I should first visit her and make peace with her. For several weeks, however, my pride prevented me from doing so. It took a little time for me to cope with my pride, and at last I decided to visit her. I met her and apologized for what I decided without discussion with her. We talked enough about each other's misunderstanding, and made peace. Even though the happening was not a joyful experience, I learned a good lesson to improve human relationships split apart. It is not easy to visit first someone who has a bad relationship with us. Without visiting and forgiving others, however, we can not cope with divisions and recover the relationship. We should first visit and forgive other

people.

Third, we need to learn that we can love people of other races to cope with divisions among races. Loving other people also is not easy. Loving is different from liking, in that loving needs one's own sacrifice. We are able to like someone without our own sacrifice. Without any sacrifice, we are able to like an actor or actress. We can not, however, say that we love him or her. Love needs sacrifice. Jesus went to Samaria in spite of slander and judgment which Jews would do, because he loved Samaritans. God sacrificed his only son, because he loved us so much. Jesus sacrificed even himself for the reconciliation between God and human beings, and race and race. In order to overcome divisions among us, we should also decide to sacrifice ourselves.

Moreover, such love has to begin from the thing which we can do right now and here. It is difficult to do suddenly a great thing. We should do one by one from easy things. If we don't stop, we can do something in the nearest future.

Years ago, a young missionary went to Japan. He tried to serve the people as a minister of the gospel, but he struggled with prejudice. How could he be a missionary to people he didn't like? His racism bothered him. Finally, he went to an older, wiser missionary. He asked, "How can I learn to love all the Japanese people?" The wise old missionary said, "Begin by loving just one."

Step by step, with God's help, we can break down the barriers which separate us from others.

On the day before he was assassinated, Martin Luther King Jr. made a speech. In that speech he said as follows:

I don't know what will happen now. We have got difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me because I've been to the mountaintop. Like anyone else, I would like to live a long life. But I'm not concerned with that. I just want to do God's will and He has allowed me to go up the mountain. I see the promised land. I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that as a people we will get to the promised land. I am happy tonight that I am not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. My eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.

We have a dream. We have a vision. We have a hope. It is not just Martin Luther King's dream. It is the dream of Jesus Christ and God the Father. It should be the dream of all Christians everywhere.

And if we'll try - if we'll take some risks and take some concrete steps - someday the dream will come true. Some day, if we'll let it happen, we can all join hands with little white children and little black children and little yellow children and sing from our hearts, "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight; Jesus loves the little children of the world."

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